

**THE ENGLISH  
TRANSLATION OF THE  
COMMENTARY ON THE HOLY  
QUR'AN COMPARATIVE STUDIES IN  
RELIGION BETWEEN ISLAM AND  
CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM AND HINDUISM**



**BY  
MUHAMMAD QASIM KHAN**

**VOLUME-III**

THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE COMMENTARY  
ON THE HOLY QUR'AN  
COMPARATIVE STUDIES IN RELIGION  
BETWEEN ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY  
AND ISLAM AND HINDUISM

NOTES EXTRACTED FROM THE TRANSLATION OF HOLY QURAN IN TELUGU

APPENDED TO  
THE EXPLANATORY TRANSLATION OF THE HOLY  
QUR'AN IN TELUGU

BY  
MUHAMMAD QASIM KHAN

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"In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful."

## **INTRODUCTION**

This 'Commentary on the Holy Qur'an' is an illuminating comparative study between 'Islam and Hinduism' as reflected in its Scriptures i.e. Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, Islam and Christianity.

The fundamental tenets of Islam are rationally explained dispelling the prevailing half-truths and fallacies about Islam among the Non-Muslims, points of coincidences and harmonies and parallels between the Holy Qur'an and the Hindu Scriptures have been high-lighted and points of conflict and differences have been discussed in the light of their Scriptures and the writings of their acknowledged authorities, - a unique feature hitherto left unexplored by the Muslim Commentators.

Commentary on the basic issue of belief in 'Monotheism', - ONENESS of God, enunciated by the Holy Qur'an and the practice of Polytheism professed and practiced in Hindu religions is exhaustive and illuminating. Commentary on the rights of women and the social and economic course of interest will be found interesting to the Muslim and non-Muslim readers alike and particularly the Hindus, social scientists and economists. The Hindu intellectual elite and Hindu religious scholars of Andhra Pradesh, welcomed this work in 1942 \*(First Edition) enthusiastically as a work which deserves to be read carefully by the Hindus and Muslims alike to bring about a greater intellectual and spiritual harmony between' our apparently antagonistic communities'.

About the merit of the 'Explanatory Translation of the Holy Qur'an' and the 'Commentary', Sir C.R. Reddy, M.A. (Can tab) D. Lit, M.L.C, lately Vice Chancellor of the Andhra University, has observed thus:-

"Your Telugu translation of the Holy Qur'an is a work of the highest merit and deserves the widest publicity. The matter is of supreme importance; the style elegant, clear, impressive and in a difficult field, apt and attractive. Your Notes pointing out coincidences and harmonies and parallels between the Qur'an and the Hindu Scriptures are a monument to your scholarship and power of thought."

For the larger benefit of the Muslims of Andhra Pradesh, I have compiled a' Bi-lingual Explanatory translation of the Holy Qur'an' in 'Telugu' and 'English' alongside the Arabic Text'.

The Explanatory translation Telugu is by (Late) Malvi Muhammad Qasim Khan Sahib and the Explanatory translation in English is by Allama Yusuf Ali.

The brief Commentary 'comprising of 200 pages appended with the Explanatory Translation' was the first attempt to inculcate and promote communal harmony, understanding and peace between Hindus and the Muslims as explained by the author in his 'Foreword' to the first and second editions. The first edition was published in 1942 which was well received by the Hindu Intellectual elite and the religious scholars alike and the expectations of the author were fulfilled as may be seen from the 'Opinions' expressed by eminent Hindu scholars.

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\* Originally 'The Explanatory translation of the Holy Qur'an' in Telugu was published without 'Arabic Text' in 1942 and 1945.

The old generation is passing out and a new generation is taking shape and it should be our continuing effort to produce more and more literature on this model. The initiative must come from the Muslims.

The Muslim readers will find this Commentary very much different from the literature on 'Tafseer' that they have so far studied. This Commentary sets a new trend in explaining Islam to the predominant majority of the non-Muslims, - particularly the non-Muslims who form 75% of the population and considering this aspect, the objectives of 'DA'WAH' are fairly and fully well fulfilled.

Intelligent Muslim readers will learn a lot about the basic beliefs of Hindus and Christians and will be able to hold their own in any scholarly discussion with their non-Muslim compatriots and teach them to respect Islam and take Muslims as their friends.

Recitation of the Holy Qur'an daily is enjoined on all the Muslim Believers and for enlightenment and understanding the message and the meaning of the Holy Qur'an a brief Commentary is necessary. The author has attempted to project the meaning and the message of the Holy Qur'an in its true historical and social perspective explaining why the religion it has expounded, - Islam, is a universal religion, final and complete for the salvation and emancipation of mankind.

It is our duty to respond to the new challenges confronting the Muslims on intellectual and spiritual planes in order to build bridges of understanding, tolerance and friendship in order to promote communal peace and harmony besides fulfilling the most commendable obligation of 'DA'WAH' invitation to Faith.

FAZALE KAREEM

## **FOREWORD**

### **(COMMENTARY)**

"Pure Pages in which are all Right Books." is a verse from The Holy Qur'an, prominently displayed on the 'Title page'. This means that the Holy Qur'an contains the essence of the teachings of all the Books revealed from the beginning of the times to different Prophets in different countries. The Holy Qur'an affirms:-

"Verily we have sent thee in truth, as a bearer of glad tidings, and as a Warner; and there never were a people without a Warner having lived among them (in the past),  
"(Surah; Fatir ' XXXV/24.)

This is the religion of the Holy Qur'an.

**\*1&2** Truth is\* ancient, although the moral and spiritual content of the 'LAW' (Dharma) propounded, is basically the same, its essence in practice necessarily evolved into different models and modes depending on the socio-political structure of the different societies, their geographical situation and climatic conditions as also the traditions evolved and language, Spread wide apart, difficulties of travel and communications and language barriers kept them isolated from one another.

The times of the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.H) (570 - 632 A.D.) are like a **\*2** door-way to a new age. Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.H) proclaimed that the Prophets who preceded him were ordained to particular nations whereas Muhammad has been ordained to the whole world and to the mankind as a whole.

The religion of the Holy Qur'an, - Islam, is a modern religion. It is not only an ideal LAW for the social and spiritual emancipation of mankind but is also a complete code of life from cradle to the grave encompassing the entire social, economic and political activities both in national and international spheres. It accords with the spirit of all ages, simple and practicable in all geographical and climatic conditions. The religion propounded by the Holy Qur'an is very simple: Its foundation is universal brotherhood; creed: uncompromising monotheism, - belief in ONE God, Creator and sustainer of the worlds.

Islam takes a world view; there is no place for differences of creed, color and caste nor language. Variations in color - white, blow fair, brown or yellow are entirely due to the climatic conditions. The people inhabiting tropical lands are black and those living in cold regions are white and as for language, it has now been established that all the languages spoken throughout the world have a common root. The teachings of Islam are simple, practicable, appealing to common sense and intellect being rational. They are liberal, modern and tolerant in matters of religious belief. The Holy Qur'an proclaims:

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**\*1&2** The author has used the Telugu Sanskrit' words: 'Satyamu sanatana mainadi'. I have translated the word 'Satyamu' as – 'Ancient', thereby meaning: bequeathed from the times immemorial.

Mark: "This is because Allah is the TRUTH. He brings the dead (AL-HAQQ) to life and He has power over everything.  
(Surah XXII/6 HAJJ). (AL-QADIM) (Primordial ancient.)

**\*2** The word 'Dharma' has been defined by 'Manu' the Hindu Law giver, as 'duties' and Sankara, the greatest exponent of 'Vedanta' has defined it as 'Obligation – obligatory duties decreed by the Scripture. Duties imply: sacrifices, gifts, tapasya, and performance of religious austerities.

\* See Notes at the end – p/11

"Let there be NO compulsion in religion:  
Truth stands out clear from Error"

(AL - BAQARAH: 2 / 256)

"Mankind was one single nation, and Allah sent  
Messengers with glad tidings and warnings"

(AL - BAQARAH: 2 / 213)

Visionaries all over the world are floating the idea of one universal language and one World. Time and distance are shrinking fast through the introduction of radio and airplanes and the ever increasing means of faster and faster transport and communications thereby bringing the peoples of the world into one vast neighborhood. What greater miracles science is destined to unfold in future is wonderful to imagine. In such a situation we are involuntarily moving towards fresh thinking in search of Truth. More and more people are attracted to the way (path) shown by the Holy Qur'an. The call of the Holy Qur'an is evidently simple and more appealing, enlightening and is gaining acceptance. Some of the more prominent features that distinguish the teachings of the Holy Qur'an from those of the other Scriptures as are existing are briefly elucidate below :-

- 1- The Holy Qur'an is propounding a complete code of conduct, both temporal and spiritual, which no other Scripture claim'
- 2- The basic essentials of the code of conduct expounded are simple and practicable on a universal seal being rational just and acceptable for mutual good which no other Scripture offers as may be evident to the readers.
3. The laws propounded by the Holy Qur'an are in no way inconsistent with the modern physical, moral, social, economic legal, political and scientific outlook.
4. The Holy Qur'an is expounding an ideal law which can be adopted with felicity, being practicable.
5. 'ONENESS' of God and Universal brotherhood are the foundations of this law.
6. The Qur'anic Law has demolished all kinds of superstitions nurtured through blind obedience of Custom and tradition,
7. It is only the Holy Qur'an that has propounded a law for the promotion of the concept of One universal society, One world government for the establishment of peaceful co-existence.



The modern world is involuntarily getting attracted to this ideal. It is only natural and inevitable. Science has broken all barriers of distance and political boundaries. Earth is looking too small to contain man and he is exploring the stars for habitation. The barriers of language are no longer an impediment in exchanging ideas and aspirations. Shakespeare of England, Goethe of Germany, Rousseau of France, Croce of Italy, Leo Tolstoy of Russia, Homer of Greece, Omer Khayyam of Persia, Kagava of Japan and Sun Yat-Sen of China are familiar names within the grasp and memory of every college student the world over irrespective of their language and race as much as Kali Das,<sup>\*1</sup> Peddana and Vemana <sup>\*2</sup> who are all renowned intellectuals, idealists and poets.

Of all the Scriptures, it is only the Holy Qur'an that has inculcated the spirit of enquiry and promoted such psychological attitudes as tolerance, liberalism and a thirst for knowledge. Indeed, history bears witness to the fact that the generation of savants and scholars of the seventh century were the followers of Islam and it is they who conducted extensive search and brought to life the otherwise nearly <sup>\*3</sup> extinct works and writings of the Greek masters, - Aristotle, Plato, Galen, Euclid, Pythagoras, Socrates and others were traced out and translated these into Arabic, enriched these sciences with their own researches and improvements before passing them on to Europe Through translations into Latin which contributed immensely to the renaissance and intellectual development of Europe in the 14th-17th century.

The advent of Islam in the seventh century marks the end of the ancient civilization and the beginning of the modern age. Thus the Holy Qur'an has opened the doorway to modern age.

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<sup>\*1</sup> They all belong to Andhra Pradesh. Vemana, yogi, was a Sudra/Dalit and yet venerated as a saint. Vemana finds a respectable place in the Oxford History of India Edited by Percival Smith at p/66-67. Vemana may be considered as a celebrated poet ranking with Tulsidas and his poems are most widely read.

<sup>\*2</sup> Even before translating the works of the Greek masters, the works

<sup>\*3</sup> of Indian writers and sages were also translated into Arabic,- notably, 'Sidhanta' by Brahma Gupta, 'Panchatantra' by Chanukya etc. Prince Dara Shukoh, the eldest son of the Emperor Shah Jehan, is credited to have got 52 'UPANISHADS' translated into Persian under his personal supervision by learned Pundits of Benaras (completed in 1657).

Prof. M. Maxmuller held a very high opinion of the translation. In his PREFACE to 'SACRED BOOKS OF THE EAST' he writes:-

" The ancient Vedic literature, the foundation of the whole literature of India which had been handed down in that country in an unbroken succession from the earliest times within the recollection of man to the present day became known for the first time beyond the frontiers of India through the UPANISHADS. When UPANISHADS had been translated from Sanskrit into Persian at that time the most widely read language of the East and understood likewise by many European scholars, they became generally accessible to all who took an active interest in religious literature of India. The translation of Dara Shikoh attracted the attention of European scholars in 1775. In that year, A. Duperron, the famous traveller and discoverer of ZEND-AVESTA obtained one MS from Shuja Ud Daula and got it translated into LATIN handed a copy to the noted German Philosopher Schopenhauer in 1802".

Presently, the modern world has entangled itself in a struggle for securing material gains and, in this process, man has forsaken all moral and ethical codes of conduct, Greed, oppression, conceit and manipulation are pushing the nations of the world towards mutual destruction. Alongside his struggle for acquiring material wealth of this world by fair and foul means if only man think for a while of his well being in the hereafter too the world will surely march towards national and international peace. In the circumstances obtaining at present the readers are invited to reflect on the teaching of Islam and decide for themselves how well the path shown by the Holy Qur'an will help us realize our cherished ideal for a better world and a world free from war.

The law propounded by the Holy Qur'an not a new law. It has only reinstated the ancient truths adaptable to the modern world needs. It is true that every nation has developed a tradition of its own through long usage and custom governing their code of social and ethical conduct. It is only natural; but when the psychological attitudes shaped through blind obedience of custom and tradition interwoven with superstition is found inconsistent and even conflicting with the sublime universal truth moral decay sets in. Tradition and custom have no conscience but their grasp is too strong to shake off and free the individual from ignorance.

The Holy Qur'an has given a clarion call to the nations of the world to return to the sublime Truth, - the same Truth as was taught by the Prophets Moses and Jesus, by the ancient Aryan sages and propagated by the Apostles of God ordained to different nations at different ages, Those sublime truths have been transformed into a Universal Law and belief the basis of which is the same one as accepted universally. Is there any religion on the face of the earth which does not believe that there is only ONE God? There is no religion which does not propagate that mankind as a whole was one family; there is no religion which propagates that oppression is not sinful; there is no religion which does not affirm that serving mankind is an act of piety and righteousness but unfortunately national traditions of false pride and jealousy. Blind belief in tradition and superstition have suppressed and stifled the truth. The Holy Qur'an has removed all illusions of mankind steeped in superstition and unbelief. Belief in ONE God is the sublime truth and the foundations of the teachings of the Holy Qur'an. It is from this positive belief flow all acts of righteousness and piety which lead to the salvation of mankind, 'Brahma' is not tradition; Brahma is not custom; it is the Truth (Satyam) The object of this commentary is to emphasize this Truth and enlighten the people of Andhra.

## NOTE

1. (i) Describing the emergence of Islam, Edward Gibbon, in his monumental work "Decline And Fall of Roman Empire" says:

"After pursuing above six hundred years the fleeting Caesars of Constantinople and German, I now descend, in the reign of Heraclius, on the eastern border of the Greek monarchy. While the state was exhausted by the Persian war, and the Church was distracted by the Nestorian and Monophysite sect, Muhammad (p.b.u.H) with the sword in one hand and the Koran on the other erected his throne on the ruins of Christianity and of Rome. The genius of the Arabian Prophet, the manners of his nation, and the spirit of his religion, involve the causes of the decline and fall of the Eastern empire; and our eyes are curiously intent on one of the most memorable revolutions which have impressed a new and lasting character on the nations of the globe."

- (ii) The sixth century is a turning point in the history of India as well.

"Soon after the middle of the sixth century the Hun kingdom on the Oxus was overthrown by the Turks, who became masters of the greater part of the short-lived Hun empire. The barbarian invasions of the fifth and sixth centuries, although slurred over by the Indian authorities, constitute a TURNING POINT in the history of the northern and western India, both political and social. The political system of the Gupta period was completely broken up, and new kingdoms were formed. All genuine traditions of the earlier dynasties have been absolutely lost. The History of the Mauryas, Kushans and Guptas so far as it is known, has been recovered laboriously by the researches of scholars, without material help from living tradition .....King Harsha Vardhan rose like a meteor (606- 647 A.D.) and subjugated the upper part of India excluding Punjab but including part of Bengal, with Kanauj as his capital. With his death in 647 A.D. partial unity of India history vanishes and is not restored in any considerable measure until the closing years of the twelfth century."

(The Oxford History of India)

**FOREWORD**  
**(To the First Edition)**  
14 Ramzan, 1360.

It was about twelve years back that I had an occasion to read the TELUGU translation of the Holy Qur'an, made by Dr. Chilukuri Narayan Rao, lecturer in linguistics at Government College, Anantapur (Andhra). After reading a few pages I instantly perceived that it contains many serious errors and betrays ignorance of the religion of Islam and its traditions. I wrote a lengthy and exhaustive Review which was published in Andhra Dina Patrika, a leading Telugu daily newspaper, 14 July, 1930. It so happened that Sri Madapati Hanumant Rao, (lovingly called Andhra Pitamahulu - grandfather), a noble man of H.E.H. The Nizam's State read the Review and wrote to me a letter admiring my critical Review as quite enlightening and offered to finance complete translation of the Holy Qur'an into TELUGU on the lines proposed in the Review. This encouraging and loving letter kindled in me a new desire to translate the Holy Qur'an into Telugu but at the same time, I was doubtful if I am competent to undertake this great task. However, encouraged by the patronizing tone of the gentleman I started in right earnest to gather material and began a serious study in depth of Islamic and Qur'anic literature alongside books on Indian Philosophy and Vedic literature. The present work is the fruit of my humble efforts.

The Holy Qur'an is a sacred Book to the billions of Muslims spread over all the countries from China and Japan in the East to the Asia Minor and the Arabian Peninsula in the West and in all other countries of the continents of Asia, Africa, Europe and America having links with all the civilizations, they constitute a majority in some and in many others, an important segment of the population. Muslim society is an international society. Islam sets an international ideal before the world and rightly claims to be a Universal Religion. The Holy Qur'an is as much sacred to the Muslims as are the Vedas to the Hindus.

'Qur'an' means that which has been compiled (into a book) or one which is recited constantly. It is recited in all the five daily prayers prescribed. The Holy Qur'an had been revealed to Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.H) in Arabic Language by the Will of God. The first Revelation was received in the month of Ramzan and that is why the month of Ramzan is treated as a Holy Month.

The Holy Qur'an comprises of 114 Chapters called 'Surahs'- Surah, means step or stage upwards. These 'Surahs' are divided into 'Ayats' which I have translated as 'sukti', Ayat means Mark. Further, the Holy Qur'an is divided into thirty parts of 'Siparas' for felicity of recitation of the whole Book in a week there are seven divisions called 'Manzil.'

The Holy Qur'an was revealed on different occasions in course of twenty three years. Part of It was revealed at Mecca and part of it at Medina where he lived for ten years. Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.H), himself indicated the arrangement of the 'Surahs' and Ayats ' in their existing order. Hazrat Abu Bakar, who was his closest companion and the first Caliph, got the Holy Qur'an copied and compiled and circulated to different centres. The greatest care was taken in the compilation of the Holy Qur'an. It can be stated with absolute confidence that the Holy Qur'an has been preserved with meticulous accuracy and purity, free from error and corruption. In lifetime of the Prophet himself the believers learnt it by heart for recitation in the five daily prayers. God has pronounced thus:-

"We have, without doubt,  
Sent down thee Message;  
And we shall assuredly  
Guard it (from corruption)

(AL Hijr 15 / 9)

There are 77,934 letters and 6,616 Ayats in the Holy Qur'an and its accuracy and purity, with its elaborate system of punctuation is preserved throughout the Muslim World by means of certification by a duly constituted Board of Ulema.

The Holy Qur'an is also known by many other names which are named in the Book itself. Some of the more prominent names are; 'Furq'an' - the Book that distinguishes the truth from falsehood. 'Az Zikr' that which is memorized, 'Al Muhaimeen' - the Book that reinstates and preserve the Truths revealed in the past, the essence of the message of 'Qur'an is reflected vividly in its names.

The Holy Qur'an has not Ordained a new law; Islam has not introduced a new religion. This is stressed beyond doubt:

"By Allah, We (also) sent  
(Our apostles) to Peoples  
Before thee; but Satan  
Made (to the wicked),  
Their own acts seem more alluring,  
He is also their patron today  
But they shall have  
A most grievous penalty.

"And we sent down the Book  
To thee for the express purpose,  
That thou Shouldst make clear  
To them those things in which  
They differ, and that it should be  
A guide and a mercy  
To those who believe"

ANHAL (16/63-64)

"And dispute ye not  
With the People of the Book,  
Except with means better  
(Than mere disputation), unless  
It be with those of them  
Who inflict (wrong and injury)"  
But say, "We believe

SHU'ARAH (19 /46)

"In the Revelation which has  
Come down to us and in that  
Which came down to you;  
Our Allah and your Allah  
Is One; and it is to Him  
We bow (in Islam)"

"And believe in what I reveal,  
Confirming the revelation  
Which is with you  
And be not the first to reject  
Faith therein, nor sell my signs  
For a small price; and fear me,  
And Me alone"

AL - BAQARAH (2 / 41)



"To thee we sent the Scripture  
In Truth, confirming  
The Scripture that came  
Before it, and guarding it  
In safety; so judge  
Between them by what  
Allah hath revealed,  
And follow not their vain  
Desires, diverging  
From the Truth that hath come  
To thee, to each among you  
Have we prescribed a Law  
And an open Way  
If Allah had so willed  
He would have made you  
A single people, but (His  
Plan is) to test you in what  
He hath given you; so strive  
As in a race in all virtues  
The goal of you all is to Allah;  
It is He that will show you  
The truth of the matters  
In which ye dispute".

M'IDA (5 / 48)

"This Qur'an is not such  
As can be produced  
By other than Allah;  
On the contrary it is  
A confirmation of (revelations)  
That went before it  
And a further explanation  
Of the Book – wherein  
There is no doubt –  
From the Lord of the Worlds"

YUNUS (10 / 37)

Expounding the essence of the teachings of Islam, the Holy Qur'an affirms

"Say; " We believe  
In Allah, and in what  
Has been revealed to us  
And what was revealed  
To Abraham, Ismail,  
Isaac, Jacob and the Tribes,  
And in (the Books)  
Given to Moses, Jesus  
And the Prophets  
From their Lord;  
We make no distinction  
Between one and another  
Among them and to Allah do we  
Bow our will (in Islam)".

Al -i- IMRAN (3 / 84)

"So set thy face  
Steadily and truly to the faith  
(Establish) Allah's handiwork  
according  
To the pattern which  
He has made mankind  
No change (let there be)  
In the work (wrought)  
By Allah; that is  
The standard religion;  
But most among mankind  
Understand not

AR RUM (30 / 30)

"Those who split up  
Their religion, and become  
(Mere) sects - each party  
Rejoicing in that which  
Is with itself".

AR RUM (30 / 32)

In this way it will be seen that the religion of Islam is not of recent origin but is ancient and rooted deep in nature and the Holy Qur'an revealed 1360 years ago is a Scripture that only confirms what has been revealed to different Prophets ordained at different stages of history to different people. The Holy Qur'an bears no prejudice to other religions seeks no confrontation. It only serves as a model to all other religions and is amenable to all those who follow honestly the truth that has come down through the ages. Qur'an has a message of good tidings and gives a call for universal fraternity without the barrier of race, color, creed and caste.

The Holy Qur'an is not a book of metaphysics or philosophy; it is not a book of ethics; it is not a book of fables and ritual; it is a comprehensive code of law affecting all stages of human life in all walks of human endeavor. All laws enunciated are free from doubt and dissent. The message of the Holy Qur'an is so simple and clear that it leaves no room for doubt and philosophically farfetched interpretation. The Holy Qur'an is specifically pointing to the folly of misguided thinking eating differing antagonistic creeds. This point is emphasized:

"Do they not consider  
The Qur'an (with care)?  
Had it been from other  
Than Allah, they would surely  
Have found therein  
Much discrepancy."

NISAA (4 / 82)

It has been stated that the Holy Qur'an is the one miracle claimed by Mohammad (p.b.u.H). Its power is unexcelled. The great transformation in the life of the nomads of the Arabian Peninsula is the most surprising event of history and the revolution it brought about is indeed unsurpassable.

Sir William Muir in his work, "Life of Mohammed" (who was under the strong influence of the Christian Missionaries) stated thus ;( Chapter-VII)

"From time beyond memory, Mecca and the whole peninsula had been steeped in spiritual torpor. The slight and transient influences of Judaism, Christianity, or philosophical enquiry upon the Arab mind have been but as the ruffling here and there of the surface of a quiet lake; all remained still and motionless below. The people were sunk in superstition, cruelty and vice.... Their religion was a gross idolatry; and their faith the dark superstitious dread of unseen things. Thirteen years before the Hejira, Mecca lay lifeless in this debased state. What a change these thirteen years now produced. Jewish truth has long sounded in the ears of the men of Medina; but it was not until they heard the spirit-stirring strains of the Arabian Prophet that they too awoke from their slumber, and sprang suddenly into a new and earnest life." \*<sup>1</sup>

"A more disunited people it would be hard to find, till suddenly, the miracle took place. A man arose who, by his personality and by his claim to direct Divine guidance, actually brought about the impossible.... namely the union of all these warring factions." (The ins and outs of Mesopotamia P-99 ibid) \*<sup>2</sup>

"And yet we may truly say that no history can boast events that strike the imagination in a more lively manner, or can be more surprising to themselves, than those we meet with in the lives of the first Musalmans whether we consider the Great Chief, or his ministers, the most illustrious of men, or whether we take an account of the manners of the several countries he conquered; or observe the courage, virtue and sentiments that equally prevailed among the generals and soldiers." \*<sup>3</sup>

\*<sup>4</sup> "That the best of the Arab Writers has never succeeded in producing anything equal in merit to the Qur'an itself is not surprising. \*

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\*<sup>1</sup> Sir W. Muir's 'Life of Mohamet Chapter-VII.

\*<sup>2</sup> The Ins and Outs of Mesopotamia P/99.

\*<sup>3</sup> Life of Mohammed' By the Count of Boulainvilliers (Eng Trs P/5)

\*<sup>4</sup> Palmer's Introduction English Translation of The Qur'an P/iv)

1. "It is the one miracle claimed by Muhammad (p.b.u.H), his standing miracle, he called it and miracle indeed it is."
2. "Never have a people been lead more rapidly to civilization, such as it was, than were the Arabs through Islam."
3. "The Qur'an is unapproachable as regards convincing power, eloquence and even composition."
4. "And it was also indirectly due the marvelous development of all branches of Science in the Muslim World."
5. "Here therefore its merits as a literary production should perhaps not be measured by some preconceived maxims of subjective and aesthetic taste, but by the effects which it produced in Muhammad's contemporaries and fellow-countrymen. If it spoke so powerfully and convincingly to the hearts of his hearers as to hitherto centrifugal and antagonistic elements into one compact and well-organized body, animated by ideas far beyond those which has until now ruled the Arabian mind, then its eloquence was perfect, simply because it created a civilized nation out of savage tribes, and shot a fresh woof into the old warp of history."
6. "But if we consider the variety and heterogeneousness of the topics on which the Qur'an touches, uniformity of style and diction can scarcely be expected; on the contrary, it would appear to be strangely out of place. Let us not forget that in the Book, that as Muhammad's newest biographer, Ludolf Krehl expresses it, "there is given a complete code of creeds and morals, as well as the law based thereupon. There are also the foundations laid for every institution of an extensive commonwealth, for instruction, for the administration of justice, for military organization, for the finances, for a most careful legislation for the poor; all built up on the belief in the One God, who holds man's destinies in His hand. Where so many important objects are concerned, the standard of excellence by which we have to gauge the composition of the Qur'an as a whole must, needs vary with the matter treated upon in each particular case. Sublime and chaste, where the supreme truth of God is proclaimed appealing in high-pitched strains to the imagination of a poetically gifted people, where the external consequences of man's submission to God's holy Will, or of rebellion against it, are pictured; touching in its simple, almost crude, earnestness, when it seeks again and again encouragement or consolation for God's messenger and a solemn warning for those to whom he has been sent, in the histories of the Prophets of old; the language of the Qur'an adapts itself to the exigencies of every-day life, where this every-day life, in its private and public bearings, is to be brought in harmony with the fundamental principles of the new dispensation."

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1. Bosworth Smith, 'Life of Muhammad'.
2. H. Hirshfield, 'New Researches' P/5.
3. Ibid p/8.
4. Ibid P/9
5. Dr. Seignasst in Hughe's Dictionary of Islam, Art: 'Qur'an'.

A word needs be said about the style and diction of the Qur'an in this context, The language in which the Qur'an has been revealed is Arabic and is in prose but one distinctive feature that is evident throughout its composition is the lilting cadence and a varying style harmonious with the subject it deals, the sound effect it produces is simply enchanting and incomparable. Even those who do not know the Arabic language will feel its musical effect on their ears as compelling, captivating, soothing and comforting. Although free from the constraints of prosody one finds a lyrical surge when hearing it recited. It is indeed a marvel of creation in language.\* (The lilting prose is captivating and majestic.)

To understand the teachings of this great Scripture a brief commentary is found necessary. There are many misgivings and misconceptions among the non-Muslim public and it is my fondest desire to dispel these unfounded doubts and suspicions by high-lighting points of harmonies and concordances between the teachings of the Vedas and Upanishads and the teachings of the Qur'an and in situations where there are differences and divergence of views such differences be reconciled strictly in accordance with the laws expounded through a critical and honest review that could be conducive to a better understanding and better appreciation. We all believe in ONE God as the Creator and sustainer of the worlds - the basic concept of the Hindu faith, ISWARA PARAMESWARA harmonizes too well with the basic teachings of the Qur'an.

God is ONE, the sublime Truth is ONE and God's revealed knowledge too is one. How then, are there any possibilities for religious differences? May be these differences have cropped up possibly due to our poor understanding of the truth or going astray after grasping the truth without faith. It is human weakness to remain enslaved to the primitive customs and traditions. When we attain a broad perspective and develop clear understanding by our power of discretion we can free ourselves mentally to grasp the sublime truth. My humble attempts have these views aims and objective. I hope, people with intellect will read the Book with an open mind.

To render the translation simple and easy to understand clearly it was not possible to follow the grammatical rules strictly. The translation in that case has been bracketed and should be viewed as an explanatory translation.

I have used the 'Urdu' explanatory translation made by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in his monumental work 'Tarjumanul Qur'an', I have gained much from another monumental work Tafseer e Haqq'ani' by Maulana Abdul Haq in Urdu. I have constantly referred to the Urdu translations made by Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi and the great Qur'anic scholar Hazrat Shah Rafiud Din. I gratefully acknowledge the assistance I have derived from the works of Allama Yusuf Ali (whose explanatory translations are in English).

As regards Vedic studies I have studied deeply the works of Bramha Sri Kanuparti Markandaya Sarma's translation of the Major Upanishads, Indian Philosophy (in English) by Sir S. Radha Krishnan (two vols.) and the History of Indian Philosophy by Prof. Das Gupta, 'Pre Buddhist Indian Philosophy' By Prof. P.C. Barua, and 'Sacred Books of the East' By Prof. M. Max Muller and 'Sacred Books of The Hindus' edited by Prof. B.D. Basu (in several Volumes) have been extremely useful and enlightening, and I acknowledge my gratitude to all those authors.

MUHAMMAD QASIM KHAN

Hyderabad – Deccan  
(India) 14 Ramzan,  
1360.

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\*Huge's Dictionary of Islam, Art: 'Qur'an'.



## **Chapter – I**



In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

### **SURAH `FATIHA' OR THE OPENING CHAPTER COMMENTARY**

SURAH FATIHA is the opening chapter of the Holy Qur'an. There are seven Ayats in it. This Surah was revealed at Mecca.

This chapter opens with the words:

"In the name of Allah, Most  
Gracious, Most Merciful"

There are 114 chapters (Surahs) in the Holy Qur'an. Excepting Chapter - 9, all others begin with the above words. This Ayat is recited in every prayer and on all occasions of commencement of any work. Surah Fatiha READS as under:-

1. "In the name of Allah,  
Most Gracious, Most Merciful,
2. Praise be to Allah.
3. Most Gracious, Most Merciful.
4. Master of the Day of Judgement.
5. Thee do we worship,  
and Thine aid we seek.
6. Show us the straightway;
7. The way of those on whom  
Thou hast bestowed Thy Grace, Thou  
whose (portion)  
Is not wrath  
And who go not astray.

Named FATIHA, although the smallest, it is a complete unit by itself and contains the essence of the Religion of Islam. Importance and excellence of this Surah has been emphasized by the Holy Qur'an itself in these words:

"And we have bestowed  
upon Thee the Seven  
Oft repeated (verses)  
And the Grand Qur'an".

(15/87)

## **THE CONCEPT OF GOD IN HINDUISM AND ISLAM:**

Every man naturally believes that there is a God and this notion is embedded in his very nature through instinct or intuition which is evident at every stage of evolution of human thought and civilization. Man's inner conscience bears witness to the fact that God exists ('Asti') but what are His attributes? Man has ever been asking himself: Where? How? Of what attributes? Man has been continuously asking himself the above questions. The Aryan sages have been constantly asking themselves and seeking answers: "Kim Brahma?" (What is Brahma?) "Kasmai Devaya Havisha Vidhema" (To whom shall we offer our oblations?) "Kim Karanam Brahma?" (Is He the first cause of creation? (of this Universe) and such questions have been agitating their minds from the very beginning of times. "Unable to catch a glimpse of Brahma the thoughts are receding" ("Yato vacho nivartante aprapya manasa saha" they were consoled by the one answer "Tapasa Brahma viji jnana swah"). "Attain the knowledge of Brahma by contemplation and meditation". In order to attain the knowledge of God spiritual contemplation and meditation may be necessary indeed but this is no plausible answer practicable for the common man. Religion must necessarily be easily comprehensible and acceptable to the generality of the public and not to a chosen or select few. In the quest for 'Brahma' - the sublime Truth, there should be no bar or discrimination of being learned or ignorant to find out whether a stated path is right or wrong. There may be difference in the perception of the right path but there should be no difference in the knowledge and concept of Godhood. Therefore it is necessary to have a clear and well defined conceptual knowledge of God as the basis of any religion. If there is a universally acceptable concept there can be no possibility for the rise of numerous religions. Of all the Scriptures it is only the Holy Qur'an that has given a definition and a name which is clear and self evident. It is on the basis of this well defined concept has based all its teachings.

### **IN QUEST OF THE SUBLIME TRUTH:**

It is found that in every age there were four problems that presented before the teachers of religion who were in quest of the Truth:-

- 1- What are the 'Gunas' (qualities) of God?
- 2- Who is sustaining this creation?
- 3- What is the end-result of the deeds we are performing in our lives and to whose authority these are subservient or answerable?
- 4- What is the path of salvation?

The above questions are echoing in the conscience of every human being. These questions are beautifully stated in 'Sweta Swatra Upanishad' as under:-

"The first Brahma students say: Is Brahma the Cause? Whence are we born? Where do we live, and whither-do we go? O ye who know Brahman, (tell us) at whose command we abide, whether in pain or in pleasure?

(Sweta Swatra Upanishad ) 1/1

In this Chapter the Holy Qur'an has provided straight and clear answers to the above questions in a lucid style leaving no room for doubt and no opportunity for misinterpretations. The reply given is candid, does not militate with reason, intellect and human knowledge.

### 1- ATTRIBUTES! GUNAS' OR SIFA'T:

There are numerous names by which God is addressed in all languages. In Islam God is named by the attributes we ascribe to Him. Such names are numerous and according to the scholars of Islam, there are 1001, Ninety nine are mentioned in the Holy Qur'an itself signifying each of the aspect of His attributes (they are all abstract nouns and have No gender and No number and are not proper nouns. \* All the attributes ascribed to Him describe but only a few of the qualities and cannot completely describe His ennobling sublime Truth. To invoke Him in contemplation and meditation we do need a name to recite His sublime qualities in prayers. Contemplation and meditation are prescribed for the purpose of purification of self. The generality of the masses require a universal name as well as those who practice austerity for the love of God. We contemplate on His qualities ('Gunās' in the language of the Vedas) "Vedam yadida mupasate" (Attain Brahma by 'Tapasa' says 'Kena Upanishad'. (Sri Krishna) in 'Bhagavad Gita' say:

"Those who sacrifice to the various deities will go to those deities. Those who worship elemental powers and spirits will go to them, so also, my devotees will come to me."

(Bhagavad Gita - 9/25)

**1\*** Elemental powers are deified and worshipped but Bhagavad Gita holds this practice as 'ignorance' and 'mistaken' approach (and such men will not attain 'moksha' - salvation from the bondage of life.) Even the **\*** 'Sruti' holds such practice as ignorance ("Andham tamasaha pravisanti ya u sambhutyagam rutaha"). The custom of deifying each of the qualities / attributes of God as an elemental power and being worshipped is due to the non-existence of a universally accepted and projected name for God.

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**1-\***See Bhagavad Gita (Translated by Swami Prabhavanand and Christopher Isherwood: page-83). The Text Reads: "Even those who worship other deities, and sacrifice to them with faith in their hearts, are really worshipping me, though with a mistaken approach. For I am the only enjoyer and the only God of all sacrifices. Nevertheless, such men must return to life on earth, because they do not recognize Me in my true nature."

**2-\***The orthodox sacred books (Sastras) of India are classed in four categories: i- Sutras ('what is heard'), the Vedas and certain Upanishads which are regarded as direct revelation.

## **2 - WHO IS SUSTAINING THE CREATION?**

### **WHOM SHALL WE PRAY?**

Among the numerous attributive functions of God three are important " 1- Create, 2- Sustain, and 3-Dissolve, that is; birth, life and death. These are the most common experiences in the life around but man has personified the three states into three independent deities, given them human forms in his own fancy and started worshipping them separately under three different names. This must have been the reason for the spread of worship of numerous gods and idol worship. Man conceived of every elemental power he saw around him as a particular God. In the midst of his delusion he was confused and thus started a quest. These thoughts must have agitated the minds of the Aryan sages for a long time. It is said in RIG VED - 10 - 121:

"Who by His might alone became the monarch of  
all that breathes, of all that wakes or  
slumbers,  
Of all, both man and beast, the Lord eternal  
What God shall we adore with our oblations."

Sweta Swatara Upanishad (Sixth Adhyaya - 13) has this  
answer:-

"He is the eternal among eternal, the thinker among thinkers, who, though one fulfills the desires of many, he who has known that cause which is to be apprehended by Sankhya (philosophy) and Yoga (religious discipline)."

In this way the enlightened sages perceived Brahma who is otherwise unknowable by our senses being immanent and without form but the generality of the public stopped at the primitive stage of worshipping personified idols of the numerous gods. Notwithstanding the mistaken notions they even started worshipping the great sages like Gautam Buddha, great warrior kings as Sri Rama and great men like Sri Krishna and the lesser warriors and allies like Hanuman as gods dedicating temples to them. In our times reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy preached against idols worship as born of utter ignorance. It has been explained in the preceding paras that this erring path being trodden is largely due to personification of the many aspects of god into (individual) gods. Aryan sages made enormous efforts to determine the form of Brahma but it is sad to note that no one has ever attempted a critical study and review of their efforts and findings to sift the truths from errors. Even those who made honest attempts came to the conclusion and decreed keeping with the dictum \* "that everything is liable to dissolve into Brahma" resolved that all the elemental forces are but the manifestations of Brahma are equally deserving of our oblations.<sup>1\*</sup>

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<sup>1\*</sup> "Sarvam Khilvidum Brahma".

There appears to be no substantive name to signify the immaculate sublime Brahma in any religion. Brahma is without form, immanent and not comprehensible by our organic senses; eternal and infinite as He is how can there be any suggestive name without compromising the fundamental concept of the ONENESS of His sublime Majesty. Any such name, if found, should not provide any opportunity to speculate in terms of human thought and logic and misguided spiritual concepts. All the same, it is necessary to have a 'NAME' which is easily understood by the common man. The Holy Qur'an has furnished such a simple, immaculate and incontrovertible name, - ALLAH, which word has no root in etymology, neither gender nor number, neither form nor symbol. It is the only appropriate word symbolizing the sublime and the formless Being. The rest of the thousand names appearing in the Holy Qur'an are derived from the attributes signified in the Holy Qur'an itself. The Holy Qur'an proclaims:

"The most beautiful names  
Belong to Allah;  
So call on him by them;  
But shun such men as  
Use profanity in his names;  
For what they do, they will  
soon be requited."

(A'ra'f : VII/180)

### **NAME: 'ALLAH', UNIVERSAL AND ETERNAL.**

In the opening Chapter the Holy Qur'an has chosen the name; 'ALLAH' to signify Him and has named four main attributes. These attributes are: - 'Rahman', (Rahim' and 'Malik e yaum id Deen'.

I have translated the word 'Rah' (Rabbu ul Alamin) as cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds. In Arabic language, the Arab lexicographers have explained it to mean, "As one who tenderly cares and feeds appropriately at every stage of growth from its conception to the ultimate end". This means that all living things from their very conception upto their ultimate end are fully and appropriately taken care of by Him thus it is He who creates, preserves and dissolves all life.

■ In describing the qualities or attributes (gunas) of God (Brahma) the functions of creation and sustenance are most important. 1- "Kim Karanam Brahma?" 2-"Kutasma jata". 3 -"Kwachasam pratishtitha?"and other like questions have been fully answered by the Holy Qur'an. Some dialecticians (of Sankhya) say that Brahma is not the cause of creation while existentialists categorically say that Brahma is the cause. Mimasists say that Karma is the cause of creation while Lokayats argue with equal force that it is in the nature of matter to evolve into consciousness through combination of atoms. Swetaswatara Upanishad (saruti) quashed all these arguments and says:

"The sages devoted to meditation and  
concentration, have seen the power  
belonging to God Himself \*1  
hidden in its own qualities (gunas) He  
being one, superintends all those  
causes, time, self and the rest \*2

(Swetaswatara Upanishad)

First Adhyaya /3.

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\*1 "Power "meaning Sakti". The Sanskrit word (Devatmasakti' is a very important term differently explained by the commentators, but meaning power belonging to the Deva, the Iswara, the Lord."

\*2 "Atman" is here taken as synonymous with 'Purusha' (primordial self -)



In this context the Holy Qur'an proclaims that Allah is not only the Creator but is also the Sustainer: 'Rab'.

Yet another name is: 'Rahman' which, I have translated as 'The one Who Bestows' favors abundantly without discrimination, best things with intrinsic beauty and benevolence. Naturally, one may ask, how is He showering these favours and benefits and on whom.? The Holy Qur'an gives the answers too. God is the Creator and is the cause of our existence which \* 'Guna' (quality) is embodied in His name 'Rab' as has already been stated in the preceding para. It is He who has endowed man with beauty, excellence and grandeur: The Holy Qur'an says:

"We have indeed Created man  
In the best of moulds"  
(Surah: 95/4) (Tin)

Inherent in creation there is not only artistry but also enchanting beauty, harmony, symmetry and order:

"Thou seest the mountains  
And thinkest them firmly fixed;  
But they shall pass away  
As the clouds pass away:  
(Such is) the artistry of Allah,  
Who disposes of all things,  
In perfect order; for He is  
Well acquainted with all that ye do."  
(Surah: Naml-XXVII/88)

What is more significant is that God's creation is overflowing with his Boons, - favours to mankind that are evident signs of His attributes of Mercy and Grace; all the phenomenon of nature (which are unalterable) have in it sources of comfort and profit correlating our human life with the Will and Power of God. The Holy Qur'an appeals to man's wisdom and intellect to ponder over these signs:

"Behold! in the creation  
Of the heavens and the earth;  
In the alternation  
Of the night and the day;  
In the sailing of the ships  
Through the ocean."

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\* Revealed, Sankara has effectively refuted all the arguments of materialists.

\* 'Taqvim', mould, symmetry, form, nature, construction. There is no fault in creation. To man, God has given the purest and best nature and man's duty it is to preserve the posture on which God has made him. (Abdullah Yusuf Ali)

\* Trends inherent in the cosmos according to Upanishad's religion.

“For the profit of mankind;  
In the rain which Allah  
Sends down from the skies,  
And the life which He gives therewith  
To an earth that is dead;  
In the beasts of all kinds  
That He scatters  
Through the earth;  
In the change of the winds,  
And the clouds which they  
Trail like their slaves  
Between the sky and the earth; -  
(Here) indeed are Signs  
For a people that are wise.”

(Surah 'AL - BAQARAH': 2/164)

Apart from the boons of sustenance and profit there is all-pervading beauty, charm and enchantment for devoid of beauty and charm our world would have been an arid and desolate place not worth living. The magnificence of nature with majestic mountains rising high above the clouds and the mighty rivers taking off from them, the gushing streams and the roaring waterfalls, the enticing beauty of its flora and fauna spreading sweet and scented perfume, the chirping of birds nesting or flying in the air with their bewitching variety of dazzling colours and beauty all combining to impart artistry and enchanting overview of scenic grandeur in all its beauty is the work of God in which man finds solace, joy and satisfaction. It is this wondrous artistry and ornamentation in nature that has been termed as 'Rahmat' - Grace and Benevolence.

Everyone has a share in the unbounded Grace and Bounty of the Lord's Creation and these boons are the common heritage of mankind as ordained by God. The sun shines on every one irrespective of whether he is a saint or sinner without any discrimination and distinction but the wicked amongst mankind are using these God-given gifts for their own selfish enjoyment and for inflicting tyranny on their fellow creatures. They will certainly reap bitter fruit for their misdeeds. They will not escape retribution.

The God-given gifts are meant to be used for leading a virtuous life and work for spiritual elevation but if these are misused and monopolized for a selfish purpose, committing aggression and spreading strife and vice retribution follow. It is a foolish act to touch fire for it burns and it is equally foolish to jump into water for it drowns although water and fire are the best of the boons. There is nothing in nature that is not useful for mankind nor anything that is injurious and harmful; it is only their misuse that causes harm.

### 3- REWARD AND RETRIBUTION.

For those who do good there is a reward and the wicked are punished. Good and evil deeds find their rewards and punishments in the Hereafter. "Allah is the Lord of the Day of Judgment."

In nature there is pain and built-in preventive mechanism too to help and overcome in quick succession. This rule is seen pervading throughout the universe affecting all life. If we slip and fall into the deep water we do not drown immediately because of the inbuilt property of buoyancy and if the germs of disease force their way into our bodies there are other germs within the body to ward off the attack. Every action has its destined effect is evident in nature but human life is endowed with free will; our thoughts and motives - both concealed and open, our deeds and the degree of vice and virtue performed in respect of their fellow beings can only be determined after their death in the light of the sum total of the cumulative good or evil and the manner they have acquitted themselves according to the inviolable laws decreed. The Holy Qur'an admonishes the wrong doers and proclaims:-

"To the pattern on which  
He has made mankind;  
No change (let there be)  
In the work (wrought)."

(Surah 'AR RUM': 30/30)

Only God alone fixes the Day of Judgment for awarding the fruits of our good deeds. This aspect of His attributes is fundamental to our Belief and on this rests our belief in life after death. The Holy Qur'an says:-

"Men ask thee concerning  
The Hour; say, "The knowledge  
Thereof is with Allah (alone)  
And what will make thee  
Understand? – perchance  
The Hour is neigh."

(AHZAB : 33/63)

#### 4- SALVATION:

All religions, in some or other way, do affirm that God is ONE but there are none which worship only One God. For instance, even 'ritual' is prescribed in Taittiriya Upanishad - Narayana Prasna - for worshipping \* wind and other elements as individual gods visible to human senses ('Pratyaksha Devasi'). The Holy Qur'an emphasizes that only One God is to be worshiped and no other:-

"Thee alone we worship  
And Thine aid we seek"

That is the solemn promise and declaration God seeks from man. The Holy Qur'an has condemned worshipping of multitudes of gods for the grant of each of their wishes. In obedience to His command in the Holy Qur'an the worshiper prays:-

- 5- "Thee alone we worship  
And Thine aid we seek.
- 6- "Show us the right path.
- 7- "The way of those on whom  
Thou has bestowed Thy Grace,  
Thou whose (portion)  
Is not wrath  
And who go not astray."

Therefore, the worshiper seeking and beseeching for salvation prays as above.

The Holy Qur'an is offering a proof of His Being (asti) which corresponds with the affirmation stated in 'Sewta swatara Upanishad: - Adhyaya VI (8 and 9)

- 8- "There is no effect and no cause known of Him, no one seen like unto Him or better; His high power is revealed as manifold, as inherent, acting as force and knowledge.
- 9- "There is no master of Him in this world, no ruler of His, not even a sign of Him. He is the cause, the Lord of the lords and of the Organs<sup>3</sup> and there is of Him neither parent nor Lord.

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\* "Indra pura pathu naswasti dam - Namo Rudraya Vishnave mruturme pahi, Medham ma indroda datu medham me aswina ubhava dattam pushkara vraja.

\* May god Indra who pours rain provides us comfort and security comes to our aid.  
Salutations to Rudra and Vishnu. May they come to our rescue from death.

Indra and goddess Saraswati and the two Asvini devatas adorned with lotus garlands increase our sex power."

2. If He could be informed from a sign, there would be no necessity for the Veda to reveal Him.
3. 'Karana' instrument is explained as organ of sense. The lords of such organs would be all living beings and their Lord the true Lord.

(Sanskrit text reproduced in Telugu Script, translation in Telugu made by K. Markandeya Sarma, a recognized Vedic scholar, adopted by the author. English translation of all Upanishads cited are by Prof. F. Max Muller)

**NOTE 2 & 3** are by Sankara Charya, the acknowledged authority on Upanishads & Vedas.

Sanskrit texts quoted from Sri Mad Bhgavad Gita - English translation by Christopher Isherwood and Swami Prabhavanand.

## **CHAPTER - II**



"In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful."

### **SURAH - II 'AL - BAQARAH' OR THE 'HEIFER':**

**INTRODUCTION:** This Chapter was revealed when the Prophet was residing in Medinah. There are forty Sections containing 286 verses. This Chapter is named 'AL - BAQARAH' after the parable of the 'Heifer' mentioned in verses 67 - 71 narrating the insufficiency of faith; faith calls for unswerving obedience and the people of Moses were found half-hearted.

#### **NOTE:**

Verse - 1: 'A L M'. These are abbreviated letters - syllable. Neither the Prophet nor his companions elaborated the meaning of this syllable. Five other Surahs begin with this syllable. Many commentators tried to explain the mystery of this syllable but they are all pure conjectures.

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Verse - 3: " Who believe in the Unseen,  
Are steadfast in  
prayer, And spend out  
of what We have  
provided for them."

"Belief" corresponding to the Arabic word, EEMAN and the vedic word 'Sradha' signifies unquestionable acceptance of theistic values and wisdom and unswerving obedience. That is 'Faith'. (The word 'Unseen' refers to: His" I) Angelic Messengers (Angels) "Human Messengers, in the Last Day (Resurrection) and Final Judgement and in the determination of good and evil by God)

- (3) EEMAN is belief in the existence of ONE God and the laws as expounded by the Holy Qur'an. I have translated the word in Telugu as 'Viswasamu' and used it as a verb. In the Vedic terminology, the word means: Sradha. Even in 'Srutis' (the revealed Books of Hindus) the importance of Sradha in spiritual life has been highlighted and emphasized; in Rigved, Sradha has been named as a supreme deity in the following words: "Even Gods offer oblations to Sradha" (Rig 11/151. Swetaketu, a Vedic Sage, was advised by his father to follow Sradha "Keep faith". Sradha 'Tapasa' "Sradhatswah". Sradha also means absolute attention in contemplative devotional ritual. Taittiriya Upanishad states that ritual performed without Sradha is worthless.

'EEMAN' (faith) is not mere belief; it is its very foundation, deeply the rooted in the conviction to strive in the performance of good deeds.

Verse - 4: And who believe in the Revelation  
Sent to thee,  
And sent before thy time,  
And (in their hearts)  
Have the assurance of the  
Hereafter.

Verse - 5: "They are on (true) guidance,  
From their Lord, and it is  
These who will prosper.

Verse - 6: "As to those who reject faith,  
It is the same to them  
Whether thou warn them  
Or do not warn them;  
They will not believe."

- 3- The Holy Qur'an is exhorting the faithful to "Believe in the Unseen" - elements that cannot be perceived by organs of human senses i.e. God, soul, Angels, life after death and other super natural phenomena for which there is no visual evidence to support their existence. For this reason the Charvakas (Lokayats) have altogether rejected the existence of God and the Angels, belief in the Hereafter and all other articles of faith. The Holy Qur'an is calling on such misguided men to the path of religion and righteousness. If a truth is imperceptible to human senses and is invisible its existence cannot be rejected. To deny the supernatural can be likened to a blind man rejecting the sun. It is sheer ignorance. One who is devoid of belief is a transgressor for belief is the foundation of faith and this point is stressed by the Holy Qur'an.

#### **PRAYERS:**

- 4- Purpose of prayer: the Holy Qur'an has elaborated the purpose of prayer in this verse:

"Recite what is sent,  
Of the Book by inspiration  
To thee, and establish  
Regular prayer; for prayer  
Restrains from shameful  
And unjust deeds;  
And remembrance of Allah  
Is the greatest (thing in life)  
Without doubt. And Allah knows  
The (deeds) that ye do."

(Surah XXIX / 45)

Prayer purges us of anything (act, plan, thought, motive, words) of which we should be ashamed or which would work injustice and aggression to others.

Faith is strengthened by prayers and sinful thoughts and doubts are destroyed. Constant contemplation promotes theistic wisdom and devotion is commanded.



## ECONOMIC REFORMS:

- 5- (Verse-3) Following closely, the Holy Qur'an is also preaching economic reformation in the following command:

"And spend out of what We  
Have provided (for them)."

- spend from what we have bestowed on you in righteous way. Riches often lead to miserliness, vanity and arrogance and in a thousand ways to evil ways. Earning money (riches) is not in itself bad but its accumulation is an evil. To mitigate this evil man has been commanded to spend it in a just manner. Man who is intoxicated with wealth cannot keep on the righteous path. "A camel can pass out through the hole of a needle but a rich man cannot get through the door to heaven" said Jesus Christ. The Holy Qur'an is preaching that money must be spent and not accumulated - and spent constantly for a good cause.

The main instrument that keeps accumulation is interest. This is why the Holy Qur'an has prohibited interest. Constraints on the division of inheritance of (properties and riches) are also devised in keeping with the principle of equity. There is no place for 'joint property' in Islam. Modern principles of economic planning are also strengthening the economic stance of Islam.

- 6- Very much like the arrogance of wealth is the learning if it smacks of vanity and conceit. One who has really perceived truth will not be averse to acceptance of truth wherever and whenever he comes across it. If it conflicts with his own views he will do his best to reason out and reconcile before rejecting it. Truth is not the inheritance of one man; it is a universal heritage and timeless and transcending geographical barriers. Truth is constantly being inscribed on the slates of human mind. Such truth may manifest in different ways in different countries and different times in different ways and different language. Sometimes, it is possible that only a few aspects of truth may have been made manifest. Thus spoke Jesus Christ: "I have much more to tell you but this is not time for it. Another Prophet will come after me who will proclaim the Truth." In our own country, according to tradition, different modes of Dharma have been prescribed for different ages and this is a well known spiritual trend. In the 'Parasara Smriti' in 'Kruta yuga' contemplation, in 'Treta yuga' sacrifices (yajnas), in Dwapara yuga 'worship and in 'Kali yuge' oblations and prayers. In this way different modes have been spoken of in different ages for seeking God's Grace. Therefore it is infidelity to reject the Books revealed in the past. The Holy Qur'an commands that we should believe in Books revealed in the past to different Prophets. In numerous verses, the Holy Qur'an has proclaimed that God had ordained a prophet for every country and every prophet received a Book (law, decree):-

"We did send apostles  
Before thee, and appointed  
For them wives and children  
And it was never the part  
Of an apostle to bring a Sign  
Except as Allah permitted  
(Or commanded; For each period  
Is a Book \* (revealed)

Ra'd – (S-XIII/38)

(\* A law decreed (or a decree established.)

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\* (A law decreed or a decree established.)

"By Allah, We (also) sent  
(Our apostles) to peoples  
Before thee; but Satan  
Made, (to the wicked),  
Their own acts seem alluring  
He is also their patron today,  
But they shall have  
A most grievous penalty"

Nahl (XVI/63)

"And we sent down the Book  
To thee for the express purpose,  
That thou should make clear  
To them those things in which  
They differ, and that it should be  
A guide and a mercy  
To those who believe"

Nahl (XVI/64)

"To thee we sent the Scripture  
In truth, conforming  
The Scripture that came  
Before it, and guarding it  
In safety; so judge  
Between them by what  
Allah hath revealed,  
And follow not their vain  
Desires, diverging  
From truth that hath come  
To thee. To each among you  
Have we prescribed a Law  
And an open Way  
If Allah had so willed  
He would have made you  
A single people, but (His  
(Plan is) to test you; so strive  
As in a race in all virtues,  
The goal of you all is to Allah,  
It is He that will show you  
The truth of the matters  
In which ye dispute:."

Ma'ida (V/48)

Appropriate to the geographical location, climate and times, there may be variation in laws but the basic principles remain unaltered says the Holy Qur'an. The Prophet has been commanded to tell the people, in case they dispute:

"And dispute ye not  
With the People of the Book,  
Except with means better  
(Than mere disputation), unless  
It be with those of them  
Who inflict wrong (and injury)  
But say, "We believe  
In the Revelation which has  
Come down to us and in that  
Which came down to you:"  
(('Maryam' XXIX/46)

In this way the Holy Qur'an is preaching a universal religion which transcends all barriers of time and territorial boundaries. In the eyes of the Holy Qur'an the whole mankind is one family. Changes with times are just like the waves in a turbulent sea. Whether calm or turbulent, the ocean itself never changes; such is the nature of truth which remains the same and it is in this way all revealed Books are equally true.

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**Not add**

**Verse – 4 \*"**And who believe in the Revelation  
Sent to thee  
"And sent before thy time,  
And ( in their hearts)  
Have the assurance of  
The Hereafter."

## LIFE AFTER DEATH:

- 7- "Believe in life after death" urges the Holy Qur'an. All theistic religions believe in life after death. The Charvakas (who are a materialist sect of pre-Buddhist philosophy) do not believe in soul, god and life after death. However, since the times of Rigved there are many notions about life after death which are elaborated hereunder by Dr. Radha Krishnan in his work 'Indian Philosophy - Vol-1:

"In the \*Brahmanas we do not find any one view about the future life. The distinction between the path of the fathers and devas is given. Rebirth on earth is sometimes looked upon as a blessing and not an evil to be escaped from. It is promised as a reward for knowing some divine mystery. But the most dominant view is that of immortality in heaven, the abode of the gods Even the stars are regarded as the abode of the dead. It is individual existence, though in a better world, that is the aim still. In the Brahmanas immortality, or at least longevity, is promised to those who rightly understand and practice the rites of sacrifice, while those who are deficient in this respect depart before time to the next world where they are weighed in a balance, and receive good and evil according to their deeds The doctrine of Brahmanas is that all are born again, in the next world, where they are recompensed according to their deeds, the good being rewarded and the wicked punished. A man born into the world which he has made"

"Man must be born to suffer or enjoy the fruit of his good and bad deeds. Until the evil deeds are entirely expiated and erased there may be many more rebirths. Those who performed good deeds may enjoy a life of bliss in heaven or be born in menial castes to suffer the punishment, - castes of chandalas or swine. This is the religion of Vedas.

What does the Holy Qur'an say about the life after death? We find some similarity with the religion of Brahmanas and Vedas to some extent. The Holy Qur'an also speaks of heaven and hell. The dead will get corresponding rewards and punishment for the good and bad deeds committed in their earthly life. The virtuous will enjoy the bliss of paradise and the wicked meted out punishment commensurate with their sin. Soon after the soul leaves the body deeds performed by the dead are borne away to the next world as the breeze carries away perfume. The deeds performed are weighed in a balance as stated in Satapatha \*Brahmanas. It is surprising that both the Scriptures use the same metaphor. The enjoyment of the bliss of paradise is permanent but the fire of Hell is not permanent the fire of the Hell purifies even as fire purifies metals of their impurities. The Holy Qur'an says:

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\* Each Veda consists of 3 parts known as Mantras, Brahmanas and Upanishads. Brahmanas include the precepts and religious duties.

\* Gautama Dharma Sutra (2-2-26)- Pauranic religion also accords with these views

**VI:A' am' 160-**

"He that doeth good  
Shall have ten times  
As much to his credit;  
He that doeth evil  
Shall only be recompensed According  
to his evil.  
No wrong shall be done  
Unto (any of) them."

**(`An'am' VI/165)**

"It is He who hath made  
You (His) agents, inheritors  
of the earth; He hath raised  
You in ranks, some above Others; that  
He may try you  
In the gifts He had given you;  
For thy Lord is quick  
In punishment; yet He  
Is indeed Oft- forgiving,  
Most Merciful"

The door of Mercy is always open to those who sincerely repent and show it by conduct.

Hell has been described in the Holy Qur'an as a dreadful and terrible place to live in. So too have the Vedas, Brahmanas, Srutis and the Puranas; Heaven has been described as an abode of joy and eternal bliss.

The Holy Qur'an an says:- about 'Hell':-

SURAH: 104 : Humaza:- Scandal monger: (Translation by M. Pickthal)

**TEXT**

1. " woo unto every slandering traducer,
2. Who hath gathered wealth (of this world  
and arranged it.)
3. He think the that his wealth will  
render him immortal
4. Nay, but verily he will render him immortal  
be flung to the consuming one
5. Ah , what will convey unto thee what  
the consuming one is:
6. (It is ) the fire of Allah, Kindled,
7. Which leapeth up over the hearts (of men)
8. Lo : it is closed in on them
9. In out stretched columns."

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- (8) Once falsehood creeps in the mind truth is rejected and no amount of preaching can avail man for arrogance is part of human nature.
- (9) Their eyes and ears are closed even to visible signs and manifest realities.

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**COMMENTARY**

It has described in figurative and symbolic language that \* heaven is a state of spiritual bliss while \* hell is the fire kindled in the human heart (by the lust of worldly desires he pursued in his worldly life.

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" \* " Hell , in the words of the Holy Qur'an, is God's kindled fire which mounts above the hearts – the painful realization of one's failure as a man. Heaven is the joy of triumph over the forces of disintegration (Iqbal: Reconstruction of religious Thought in Islam P/123.

## **(10) HYPOCRITES:**

### **Section - 2:**

In Section - 1, two classes of men are spoken of: One, the righteous (1-4), and two: those who turned back and rejected Faith. In section - 2: yet another class of men has been pointed out sharply; these are the hypocrites who may be likened to wolves in lamb's skins. These are the fools whose desire it is to deceive and beguile the believers and the rest not realizing their own folly. Outwardly they pretend to be believers but are insincere. They pose as men of peace but they are indeed the wicked ones who spread mischief on earth; There are others who say they are wise and they will not accept (Faith) without thought and criticism like fools; indeed they are the ignorant. There are some who apparently accept faith but secretly they say that they have accepted faith for amusement. By the way, Bhagavad Gita also divided the wicked into four categories, see Ramanuja's Commentary on Bhagavad Gita. They are all a wicked lot whose discretion has been blunted by worldly desires. The psychological state of mind of the hypocrites has been well explained in the above two sections.

In the beginning, the hypocrites may gain some material benefits but after this perversion there is nothing but ignominy in the Hereafter. In this worldly life they may earn material wealth and affluence and may even be praised for their deception by the ignorant but once his life is extinguished there is only pitch darkness. The similitude of such hypocrites is like a spark that lights up but instantly it goes off leaving him in pitch darkness.

Can we reclaim these hypocrites to the path of righteousness? That is impossible because they cannot comprehend truth. It is just like sounding a conch before the deaf; they are averse to truth. Truth is imperceptible to them even as the moonlight to the blind. They are dumb and cannot speak the truth.

The second metaphor is the psychological trend of the hypocrites. They stoop low; when once they perceive some material gain they will not overcome their perverse nature to profit through false pretensions of outward faith and once they find it unprofitable and risk of life, they are not ashamed to back out because they are lacking in sincere faith.

### **Section - 3**

#### **(11) Verse - 21:**

One secret of faith has been expounded: "learn righteousness" 'And you will be protected from falling into evil ways'.

In this context 'Bhagavad Gita says:-

"Though a man be soiled with the sin of a lifetime, let him but love men, rightly resolved in utter devotion, the man who loves me shall not perish."

(Ch: 9/30) Bhagavad Gita

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## **POLYTHEISM IS CONDEMNED AND MONOTHEISM UPHELD:**

(12) Verse - 22:

All the phenomena and their inherent trends in nature are strictly according to the dispensation of God following unalterable laws but elemental forces, each by itself, have been personified and deified as gods deserving worship. In Rigved and other sacred Books of Hindus worshiping of these elemental forces as gods is sanctioned. In Rigved itself it is stated: "that these multitudes of gods will guide men nearest to the supreme god." (Rigved 1/24)

In the Holy Qur'an there is a reference to this religion in the following verses:

"Is it not to Allah  
That sincere devotion  
Is due? But those  
Who take for protectors other  
Than Allah (say): "We only  
Serve them in order that  
They may bring us nearer  
To Allah "Truely, Allah  
Will judge between them  
In that wherein they differ  
But Allah guides not  
Such as are false  
And ungrateful"  
`Zumar' (XXXIX/3)

Is it then that Aryan religion taught the worship of multitude of gods? If we study the religious books of the Aryans carefully such a doubt definitely arises. Noted scholars \* Dayanand and Raja Ram Mohan Roy have said that polytheism has not been taught in the Vedic religion and proved it by their scholarship. For an intellectual and Commentator it is not proper to give credence but to state facts only.

### **VEDIC RELIGIONS:**

In the Hindu Scriptures polytheism in some and monotheism in some other Books has been ordained. Dr. S. Radha Krishnan, (the renowned authority on Indian Philosophy) has described the progressive evolution of religious thought of the Aryans in a lucid way and states that there have been as many as five stages:- (See 'Indian Philosophy' Vol.-I P/99)

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\* Dayanand, the founder of Arya Samaj, devised an altogether new grammar to prove that the devas namely, Agni, Vayu, Indra, etc. are alluded as attributes of one supreme God.



"The Vedic thinkers were not unmindful of the philosophical problems of the origin and nature of the world. In their search for the first ground of all changing things, they, like the ancient Greeks, looked upon water, air, etc., as the ultimate elements out of which the variety of the world is composed. In the pluralistic stage the several gods, Varuna, Indra, Agni, Viswakarman, were looked upon as the authors of the universe. When we get to the monotheistic level the question arises as to whether God created the world out of His own nature without any pre-existent matter or through His Own power acting on eternally pre-existent matter. The former view takes us to the higher monistic conception, while the latter remains at the lower monotheistic level and we have both views in the Vedic hymns. In X, /121 we have an account of the creation of the world by an Omnipotent God out of pre-existent matter. Hiranyagarbha arose in the beginning 'from the great water which pervaded the Universe'"

Many citations from Upanishads propounding ONENESS of God (Monotheism) can be given.  
<sup>1\*</sup> O Yajnavalkya Maharshi ! How many Gods are there? "he replied: "ONE" (Brihadaraka Upanishad 9/1) Maitreya Upanishad 459) (Mundaka Upanishad 1/1; Taittiriya Upanishad 1/5 etc.)

Progressive evolution is only natural; this has been symbolically enunciated by the Holy Qur'an in this allegory relating to Prophet Ibrahim:

(S:VI: An'am) 75- "So also We did show  
 Abraham the power  
 And the laws of the heavens  
 And the earth, that he  
 Might (with understanding)  
 Have certitude.

" " " 76 - "When the night  
 Covered him over,  
 He saw a star!  
 He said: "This is my Lord."  
 But when it set,  
 He said, "I love not  
 Those who set"

S:VI: An'am) 77- "When he saw the moon  
 Rising in splendour,  
 He said, "This is my Lord"  
 But when the moon set,  
 He said, "Unless my Lord  
 Guide me, I shall surely  
 Be among those  
 Who go astray."

" " " 78 - "When he saw the sun  
 Rising in splendour,  
 He said, This is my Lord;  
 This is the greatest (of all)."  
 But when the sun set,  
 I am (now) free  
 From your (guilt)  
 Of giving partners to Allah."

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<sup>1\*</sup> Dr. S. Radha Krishnan: 'Indian Philosophy' Vol-I P/144.

“ “ ” 79 - "For me, I have set  
My face, firmly and truly,  
Towards Him Who created  
The heavens and the earth,  
And never shall I give  
Partners to Allah."

“ “ ” 80 - "His people disputed  
With him. He said;  
"(Come) ye to dispute  
With me, about Allah,  
When He (himself)  
Hath guided me  
I fear not (the beings)  
Ye associate with Allah;  
Unless my Lord willeth,  
(Nothing can happen).  
My Lord comprehended  
to His knowledge all things;  
Will ye not (yourselves)  
Be admonished?"

(VI/76 - 80)

Concerning the polytheistic trends ingrained in the Hindu religious psychology Dr. S. Radha Krishnan observes:-

"None asked the people to forsake the gods they were wont to worship. Ingenious explanations, suggestions and symbolism helped to interpret the old superstition with the new idealism. While the hour demanded fidelity to the spiritual ideal, we find in the Upanishads a good deal of temporizing....

The polytheistic conception was too deeply rooted in the Indian consciousness to be easily overthrown There was also a reverence to the past."

5(Indian Philosophy Vol.I)

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### **DICTION OF THE HOLY QUR'AN - A STANDING MIRACLE:**

(13)/23-24

In the two following verses (23 - 24) the unsurpassable excellence of the diction of the Holy Qur'an is cited. The Holy Qur'an is considered as a literary miracle; and it is the one miracle claimed by the prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.H) who was illiterate. Western biographers of the prophet and Western scholars have taken particular note of this ringing challenge:

"It (Holy Qur'an) is one miracle claimed by Muhammad - his standing miracle, he said -and a miracle indeed it is."

(Bosworth Smith 'Life of Mohammad)

"The (Holy) Quran is unapproachable, as regards its convincing power, eloquence and even composition."

(Hirshfeld, " New Researches" P/8)

(14) Verse - 30:

In this verse it is stated that Allah has created seven firmaments (Akasas):

“Moreover His design comprehended the heavens  
For He gave order and perfection  
To the seven firmaments;”  
And of all things  
He hath perfect knowledge.”

This has been elaborated by commentators as meaning seven stages in the evolution of  
\* mind - (Buddhi, Manasa) the figure of seven appears extensively in Aryan religious thought and  
lore.

(See Taittiriya Upanishad - Narayana prasna: 12/2)

"He who lacks the proper intuitive awareness, and is thoughtless and impure, does not reach that place (PADA- (the state of transcendental existence); he tips over into the whirlpool of death and rebirth (samsara). But he who is full in intuitive awareness, thoughtful and pure at all times, reaches that place, whence one is not reborn. That goal is the Cosmic all-pervading self divine."

(Katha Upanishad, 3/5 / 9)

#### Section -4:

AL - BAQARAH: 33

“Behold: they lord said to  
the Angels; : “ I will create  
A vicegerent on earth. “They said,  
wilt thou place therein one who will make  
Mischief therein and shed blood? –  
Whilest we do celebrate Thy praises  
And Glorify Thy holy (Name)?”  
He said: “I know what ye know not “

36 “He said “O Adam! tell them  
Their natures. “When he had told them,  
Allah said: “Did I not tell you  
That I know the secrets of heavens  
And earth, and I know what ye reveal  
And what ye conceal.”

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\* Manasa means: conscious mental faculty:

Buddhi means: intuitive awareness which is a manifestation of the irrational unconscious. In a sense both are complimentary to each other.

## **MAN IS THE CROWNING GLORY OF CREATION:**

### **Section -4:**

Verse - 30:

Man's supremacy in creation has been proclaimed by Allah before an assembly of the Angels. Man is the crowning glory of creation and he is entrusted with the highest office of vicegerency (of the Lord) on earth before whom the Angels prostrated on the commands of Allah because He imparted man the 'knowledge of things'.

Taittiriya Upanishad has related how in the beginning of the world knowledge of 'Brahma Vidya' was imparted to 'Manu' (the first man in the Aryan religious thought and lore corresponding to 'Adam') by virtue of this (Prajna or volition or will) he was elevated over the 'Devas'; the Devas became subservient to man.

(See Taittiriya Upanishad - Narayana Prasna: 1/5.)

(15)/33

God bestowed intellect and free will and by virtue of this the knowledge of essential nature of things was imparted to Adam. - 'Sarwa vastu parijnanam' essence of the nature of things - means 'Rita' in Aryan religious thought + Rita means which illuminates the intellect or 'Buddhi' (See Vidyaranyakrita Jivanmukti Prakasika.) "VaSurahnyo vibhurasī prānitwamasi samdhata Brahmastwa masi". In Taittiriya Upanishad - Narayana prasna, Mantra - 20, God (parameswara) is praised as 'VaSurahnya' which means "One who imparted through His Grace, knowledge of the essence (nature) of things."

## **THE PROUD SPIRIT:**

(16)/36

'Iblis' is the evil one among the Angels on whom the wrath of Allah had descended; The Holy Qur'an says:-

(Surah:2) (AL - BAQARAH) 30- "Behold, thy Lord said to the angels,  
"I will create  
A vicegerent on earth. "They said,  
"Wilt Thou place therein one who will  
Make Mischief therein and shed blood?"  
While we celebrate Thy praises  
And glorify Thy holy (name)?"  
He said; "I know what ye know not."

(Surah:2) (AL - BAQARAH) 31- "And He taught Adam the nature  
Of all things; Then He placed them  
Before the angels, and said: Tell Me  
The nature of these if ye are right."

- (Surah:2) (AL - BAQARAH) 32- "They said: "Glory to Thee; of knowledge  
We have none, save what Thou  
Hast taught us; in truth it is Thou  
Who are perfect in knowledge and  
wisdom."
- " " " 33 - "He said: 'O Adam! tell them  
Their natures "When He had told them,  
Allah said, "Did I not tell you  
That I know the secrets of heavens  
And earth, and I know what ye reveal  
And what ye conceal."
- " " " 34 - "And behold, We said to the angels,  
"Bow down to Adam"; and they bowed down;  
Not so Iblis; he refused and was  
haughty;  
He was of those who reject Faith."
- " " " 35 - "We said, "O Adam ! dwell thou  
And thy wife in the garden,  
And eat of the bountiful things therein  
As (where and when) ye will,  
but approach not this tree,  
Or ye run into harm and  
transgression.
- " " " 36 - "Then did Satan make them slip  
From the (Garden), and get them out  
Of the state (of felicity) in which  
They had been. "We said;  
"Get ye down, all (ye people)  
With enmity between yourselves,  
On earth will be your dwelling place  
And your means of livelihood –  
For a time" ""
- " " " 37 - "Then learnt Adam from his Lord  
Words of inspiration, and his Lord  
Turned towards him; for He  
Is oft-Returning, Most Merciful.
- " " " 38 - "We said: Get ye down all from here;  
And if, as is sure, there comes to you  
Guidance from Me, whosoever  
Follows My guidance, on them  
Shall be no fear nor shall they grieve.'
- " " " 39 - "But those who reject Faith  
And belie Our Signs,  
They shall be Companions of the Fire;  
They shall abide therein."

- (SURAH: XV: Hijr) 26- "We created man from sounding clay,  
From mud moulded into shape;
- " " " 27 - "And the Jin race, We had  
Created before, from the fire  
Of a scorching wind."
- " " " 28 - "Behold ! Thy Lord said  
To the angels: "I am about  
To create man, from sounding clay,  
From mud moulded into shape;
- " " " 29 - "When I have fashioned him  
(To due proportion) and breathed  
Into him of My spirit,  
Fall ye down in obeisance  
Unto him."
- " " " 30 - "So the angels prostrated themselves  
All of them together;
- " " " 31 - "Not so Iblis; he refused to be  
Among those who prostrated themselves.
- " " " 32 - "(Allah) said, "O Iblis!  
What is your reason  
For not being among those  
Who prostrated themselves?"
- " " " 33 - "(Iblis) said I am not one  
To prostrate myself to man,  
Whom Thou dedst create  
From sounding clay, from mud,  
Moulded into shape."
- " " " 34 - "(Allah) said; "Then get thee out  
From here, for thou art  
Rejected, accursed"
- " " " 35 - "And the Curse shall be  
On thee till the Day of Judgement
- " " " 36 - "(Iblis) said: "O my Lord !  
Give me then respite  
Till the Day  
The (dead) are raised."
- " " " 37 - "(Allah) said: "Respite  
is granted thee –

- (SURAH: XV: Hijr ) 38 - "Till the Day  
Of the Time Appointed."
- " " " 39 - "(Iblis) said: O my Lord!  
Because Thou hast put me  
In the wrong, I will  
Make (wrong) fair-seeming  
To them on earth,  
And I will put them  
All in the Wrong."
- " " " 40 - "Except Thy servants among them,  
Sincere and purified  
(By thy Grace)."
- " " " 41 - "(Allah) said : "This (Way  
Of my sincere servants) is  
Indeed a way that leads  
Straight to me."
- " " " 42 - "For over my servants  
No authority shalt thou  
Have except such as  
Put themselves in the wrong  
And follow thee."
- " " " 43 - "And verily, Hell  
Is the promised abode  
For them all!

## SECTION - 5:

In this section the evil mongers are classified into three clear divisions; One: those who reject the Scriptures outright, Two: those who interpolate Scriptures revealed in the past and pass them on as genuine and Three: those who preach but do not practice themselves and turn away from righteous conduct.

- (Surah:2) (AL - BAQARAH) 41- "And believe in what I reveal,  
Conforming the revelation  
Which is with you  
And be not the first to reject  
Faith therein, nor sell My Signs  
For a small price: and fear Me  
And Me alone."
- " " " 42 - "And cover not Truth  
With falsehood, nor conceal  
The Truth when ye know (what it is)."
- " " " 43 - "Do ye enjoin right conduct  
On the people, and forget  
(To practise it) yourselves,  
And yet ye study the Scripture?



Will ye not understand?"

For the edification of the above identified classes the Holy Qur'an is addressing the children of Israel in particular and mankind in general sounding them a warning from the Lord. It has been affirmed that prophets were assigned and ordained to all the peoples of the world and, Scriptures too were bestowed on some but these were interpolated by additions and corruptions mutilating the Divine Message itself. It is in order to sift the Truth from falsehood that the Holy Qur'an is revealed; it is also called by the name: 'Furqan' which means that "which sifts Truth from error, stating clearly what is right and what is wrong. The purpose of this Surah is to exhort them again to compare the message of the Holy Qur'an with the Scriptures revealed earlier and find for themselves what is True and what has been interpolated. See

(Surah:2) (AL - BAQARAH) 53- "And remember We gave  
Moses the Scripture and the Criterion  
(Between right and wrong); there was  
A chance for you to be guided aright."

**(17) / CHARITY:**

(Surah:2) (AL - BAQARAH) 43- "And be steadfast in prayer;  
Practise regular charity;  
And bow down your heads  
With those who bow down (in worship)."

The believers are commanded to give freely in charity, - 'Zakat' from what has been provided to them (by their Lord). The word, 'Zakat' in Arabic means; to get purified, giving alms. This is also called 'Sadqa' appearing frequently in the Holy Qur'an. 'Sidq' means: truth; and whatever is given away with good and pious intentions. The Holy Qur'an enjoins two kinds of charity: One: fixed and the other, in keeping with the pious and charitable disposition of one's character. The charity decreed as fixed is called Zakat (at a fixed rate of two-and-a-half percent of the total value of the property held at the end of the year). There is no limit of time and affluence for the purpose of Sadqa.

Before we say more about 'Zakat' it is only appropriate to elaborate in detail one major aspect of Islam as a religion. Religion conditions society and hence it is a social fact for, man is indeed, a social creature. The religion which has come to correct the spiritual conduct of man must necessarily combine ameliorative aspects of society too to improve the ethical, economic and social environment also. Human society may be likened to an ocean in which the individuals are like waves. Man cannot live in isolation.

Islam aims to establish an ideal society. To support the structure of this ideal society five articles of faith are prescribed as the pillars of Faith; (1) Unqualified Belief in the ONENESS of God, (2) to be steadfast in prayers, (3) to pay Zakat, (4) to observe fasting in the month of Ramzan and (5) to perform Haj. (Pilgrimage to Ka'ba). The cumulative objective of all the five articles of faith is one, and that is; to establish the sovereignty of ONE God and one universal brotherhood of mankind, totally eliminating the psychological barrier of high and low, rich and poor, master and slave - all the man-made distinctions and discriminations. - All these believing men standing shoulder-to-shoulder in congregational prayers in solemn obedience, reciting the prayer:-

- 1- "In the name of Allah, Most Gracious Most Merciful.
- 2- Praise be to Allah, The Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds.
- 3- Most Gracious, Most Merciful;
- 4- Master of the Day of Judgment,
- 5- Thee do we worship,
- 6- Show us the straightway;
- 7- The way of those on whom  
Thou hast bestowed Thy Grace,  
Thou whose (portion)  
Is not wrath,  
And who go not astray."

Without doubt, this five-times-a-day prayer, surely, can promote and inculcate a psychological sense of equality with his fellow men. The prayers, in short, constitute spiritual reconstruction of human mind conducive to the growth of universal fraternity. The annual ritual of HAJ too, is of a like character; on the plains of Arafat, all attired in similar white two-piece robe, prostrating before ONE God in prayers inculcates the same feeling of fraternity for one another.

#### **(17) / 43 ECONOMIC REFORM:**

It is well known that economic disparity is the main cause of inequality of status in social life. The rich, in their arrogance, look down upon the poor as mean creatures and this is an every-day experience. Islam has decreed ameliorative measures to reduce the gulf effectively. Zakat has been visualized as an effective instrument to tax the rich to compensate the poor. The Prophet has explained 'Zakat' as money obtained for distribution amongst the poor. "Accumulation of money in one man or one family or group of men promotes pride and arrogance which is the greatest obstacle to equality and liberty and this is the reason why Islam is deadly set against accumulation of wealth. Zakat is not income tax; it is wealth tax; the rate is two-and-a-half percent to be paid on all assets \* compulsorily. Wherever there is a Muslim Government this tax is enforced collectively and placed in a separate Zakat pool - 'Baitul Mal' as a sacred trust to be spent on the deserving. Subsistence allowances are paid to orphans, widows and otherwise needy and deserving families.

#### **FASTING ENJOINED:**

People who have not known thirst and hunger should experience these themselves and then alone they can realize better what it is to be thirsty and what it is to be hungry. Muslims are commanded to observe fasting during the month of Ramzan. Fasting dams the profane desires and are like a yoga exercise to purify one's self.

The five pillars constituted by Islam for the reconstruction of an ideal society are the five articles of Faith.

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\* See Duet' XVIII - 18 - 19:

Also see Surah LXI/6 - Foretold by Jesus also.

## PROPHET MOSES.

(18) / In sections: 6, 7 and 8 the personal experiences in the life of Prophet Moses are referred. Moses is the Prophet ordained to the children of Israel, known as Jews. In the Bible too, there are extensive references to Prophet Moses. The reason for giving so much more prominence to Prophet Moses is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an itself. The Holy Qur'an is addressing the people thus:

"Then after them sent We  
Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh  
And his chiefs with Our signs,  
But they were arrogant;  
They were a people in sin."  
(Yunus' Surah X/75)

The Prophet who was sent to Pharaoh was Moses. There are many similarities between the Prophet Moses and Prophet Muhammad in many ways. This is explained by Moses himself in these words to his people:

"Say: See ye?  
If (this teaching) be  
From Allah, and ye reject it,  
And a witness from among  
The children of Israel \* testifies  
To its similarity  
(With earlier Scriptures)  
And has believed  
While ye are arrogant,  
(How unjust ye are!)  
Truely Allah guides not  
A people unjust"  
`Ahqa'f' (XLVI / 10)

### `SURAH : 'SAF' : LXI/6:

"And remember, Jesus,  
The son of Mary, said:  
"O children of Israel !  
I am the apostle of Allah  
(Sent) to you confirming  
The law (which came)  
Before me, and giving  
Glad tidings of an apostle  
To come after me,  
\*1 Whose name shall be Ahmad  
But when he came to them  
With clear Signs \* 5439  
They said, "This is  
Evident sorcery!"

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\*1 (Duet, 18: 19)

"Whosoever shall not hearken unto My words which Shall speak in My name, I will require it of him."  
(John 16-13 and Old Test Testament (Acts 3: 21-22) whom the heaven must receive until the time of restitution of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His Holy Prophets since the world began. For Moses truely said unto the Fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up until you of your like unto me; him shall hear in all things whatever he shall say unto you."

The Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.H) was also descended from Prophet Abraham. Jesus passed away too but his disciples had been looking forward to the coming of a prophet as promised.\*1

The mission of some prophets was limited to preaching only but the Prophets Moses and Muhammad (p.b.u.H) were ordained to reinstate the Faith and establish the Law of God (on both of them Scriptures were bestowed). The dramatic story of Moses is preserved and retold in the Holy Qur'an. The land of birth and activity of Moses was Egypt. In those days Egypt was ruled by the dynasty of Pharaohs. The people worshiped the sun and in their language, sun god was called 'Ra' Pharaoh was considered the incarnation of sun-god. The tombs of the kings of the Pharaoh dynasty, called pyramids, may be seen in Egypt. Prophet Moses was born in the tribe of Israel who migrated to Egypt during the time of the Prophet Joseph who is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. In course of time the people of Egypt became independent and enslaved the Israelites. Moses initiated a dialogue with Pharaoh to liberate his people and migrate to the land of their choice. Moses made two simple requests to Pharaoh: firstly, to release the Israelites from slavery and secondly, to let them migrate in peace to some other land. The dramatic story of Moses has been related in the Holy Qur'an thus: Pharaoh had decreed that all male children born to Israeli parents be seized immediately after their birth and killed. Moses was born into an Israel family but was concealed for three months and, when he could no longer be kept hidden from the king's men, his mother was sorely afraid lest the babe be seized and cast into Nile to drown. God inspired his mother to place the infant in a box and cast it into Nile to float. Accordingly, his mother put him into an ark of bulrushes and cast into the river Nile. The ark floated through a channel right into the garden of Pharaoh. It was picked up by Pharaoh's men and the babe was adopted by Pharaoh's wife. In the meantime, the anxious mother, after the basket had been set afloat in Nile, had sent his sister to follow the basket and she was employed to nurse the babe. The babe grew in the palace into a sturdy youth in course of time.

One day, it so happened, that he saw in the street an Egyptian beating and torturing an Israelite which scene he could not bear and he punched the Egyptian so hard that he fell dead. It was unintentional. Moses considered Egypt no longer safe for him after this incident and he fled to Media, in Sinai peninsula. He married one of the daughters of Madianite chief. Soon, his brother Aaron joined him.

One day, while he was grazing the sheep in the valley of Tuwa on the mountain side of Tur he saw the fire at a distance and when he went up. God spoke to him; he was ordained a Prophet. He was commanded to "go forth to Pharaoh who had transgressed all bounds" and ask him to release the Israelites from their bondage. Moses, accompanied by his brother Aron, went to Egypt and requested the Pharaoh to release the Israelites from slavery and to let them to migrate to some other land of their choice. The king laughed and asked Moses, who is his God? Pharaoh, in his vanity and arrogance, considered himself to be a god. Moses replied that His Lord is the creator of all the worlds and it is He who is sustaining it". Pharaoh rejected and declared his unbelief. And he asked Moses to show any miracle in proof of his claim whereupon Moses throws his rod and lo ! it becomes, a dreadful serpent and he shows his hand which turns white. Thereupon Pharaoh commands his court magicians to contest but all their magic fails to subdue Moses.

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\*1 Surah LXI/6 and Duet - 18 : 19 - (Old Testament) ('Ha'Mim)  
(Also see Verse - 157 of Surah - VII) (An'am)

Pharaoh considers the two as expert magicians who have come with a mission to overthrow him and his institutions. At last, a contest is arranged to disprove the claim of Moses. Day of festival was fixed. The court magicians were allowed the option to show their magic first and they threw their wands and ropes first which became snakes. Then, Moses threw his rod and it became a dreadful serpent which swallowed all the snakes on the ground. Moses prevailed and the court magicians threw themselves prostrate on the ground and proclaimed with one voice: **"\*** We believe

(.....\* Verse – 70 'Ta'Ha')

In the Lord of Aran and Moses."

Pharaoh threatened his magicians with dire consequences but they stated firmly:

"For us, we have believed  
In our Lord; may He  
Forgive us our faults,  
And the magic to which  
Thou didst compel us;  
For Allah is Best  
And Most Abiding."

The Pharaoh was shown nine more Signs. He was unsteady, believing when it suited him and then falling back into unbelief once the calamity (penalty) passed away and putting off his promise to release the Israelites from his bondage, Moses stood firm exhorting his people to keep patience and trust in their Lord. At last, inspired by God, Moses started the exodus from Egypt along with his people, traveling by night reached the marshes along the Red sea. Soon, at day break, the Pharaoh and his army started on their pursuit and when he was about to overtake them, Moses prayed to his Lord imploring his help. Thereupon, he was inspired by the Lord to strike the waters with his rod. Miraculously, the waters divided, in such a way that \*(Nahl XXVI/64) "each separate part became like the huge, firm mass of a mountain" Thus Moses and his people crossed the sea in safety to the other side. The host of Pharaoh, following in pursuit, was drowned in the enveloping waters. The Pharaoh did repent and professed belief and as a mark of His Grace, God did spare his life. This episode is related in the Holy Qur'an thus:

" "Pharaoh and his host followed them

(X:Surah-Yunus) 90 - "In insolence and spite,  
At length, when overwhelmed  
With the flood, he said:  
I believe that there is no god  
Except Him Whom the children  
Of Israel believe in;  
I am of those who submit  
(To Allah in Islam)."

" " " 91 - "(It was said to him:)  
Ah now ! - But a little while  
Before, wast thou in rebellion!  
And thou didst mischief (and violence)!"

" " " 92 - "This day shall We save thee  
In thy body, that thou  
Mayest be a Sign to those  
Who come after thee!  
But verily, many among mankind  
are heedless of Our Signs!"

(SURAH: YUNUS - X)

After obtaining delivery of his people from the bondage of Pharaoh Moses went up to the mount for meditation for forty nights. In the meantime, the unbelievers among the people of Moses took to the worship of golden calf cast out of their ornaments. Moses castigated them for falling into the evil ways. They said:-

55 - "O Moses  
We shall never believe in thee  
Until we see Allah manifestly,"  
But ye were dazed with thunder  
With thunder and lightning  
Even as ye looked on.

56 - "Then We raised you up  
After your death.  
Ye had the chance  
To be grateful."

(SURAH AL - BAQARAH - II)

(Also see Surah VII/155, 143, 145).

Moses was ordained as a Prophet and bestowed the Scripture. To guard against relapse into the false belief in the calf as a god Moses ordered the \* (11/67) sacrifice of a heifer (young cow that has not yet had a calf).

This is the story of Moses in brief. For four hundred years the Israelites had suffered intolerable horrors in slavery of the Egyptians and another forty years in the wilderness of the Sinai (desert) before they arrived back into their land of Canaan. The followers of this great man and prophet are called Jews. It has been established by the historians that Moses lived in 1400 B.C. and Pharaoh Merentse was his contemporary. The authors of Cambridge History are unanimously agreed that Moses lived during the period 1380 - 1447 B.C. The story of Israel in its historical perspective has been narrated in the Holy Qur'an by way of an allegory and is addressed to the entire mankind that they may learn a lesson. Such episodes of historical personages and prophets narrated for the edification of mankind are named in the Bible.

#### **(19) / NO INTERCESSION:**

In Section - 6, two spiritual truths have been elaborated.

Firstly: that one must necessarily suffer for the wrongs perpetrated.

(AL - BAQARAH-II)/48 "Then guard yourself against a day,  
When one soul shall not avail another  
Nor shall intercession be accepted for it  
Nor shall compensation be taken from it  
Nor shall anyone be helped (from  
outside)."

In those times and in the present times too, there are many customs and traditions for the atonement of sins (and wrong doings perpetrated in this life). Christians believe that Jesus Christ atoned for the sins of humanity through crucifixion on the Cross. The widely prevalent belief among the Hindus, Buddhists and Jainis is to attain salvation through the worship of secondary gods made into idols according to their fancy and elemental forces personified into gods. Such beliefs evidently militate against natural laws. Obviously, every one of us is personally bound to answer for the misdeeds and suffer retribution awarded on that crucial Day of Judgement. It is superstition and folly to believe that the multitudes of secondary gods will come to their rescue and stand them well on that crucial Day to intercede with the Lord on their behalf to condone the sins and wrong-doings. Even our spiritual evolution is bound by laws of nature which are immutable. Prayers, charity and kindness towards our fellow creatures only reform and purify our minds and help us attain salvation but cannot, in any way, erase the sins. It brings no good praying the personified idols of a multitude of gods or pious who are fallible like ourselves. Such beliefs are result of our ignorance. Prayers reform our minds and purify our souls and God will help us abstain from falling into unrighteous ways. It is no good persisting in the evil ways and praying God to forgive us and erase the sin to ward off punishment. In the Holy Qur'an believers are exhorted to be steadfast in prayers, give alms, and abstain from wicked ways. Bhagavad Gita also says that it is a folly and ignorance to pray to the multitude of deities to escape from the retribution for sins perpetrated in this life:

"The evil doers turn not towards Me! These are deluded, sunk low among mortals. Their judgment is lost in the maze of Maya, until the heart is human no longer; changed within to the heart of a devil."

Among those who are purified by their good deeds, there are four kinds of men who worship Me; The world-weary, the seeker for knowledge, the seeker for happiness and the man of spiritual discrimination is the highest of these. He is continually united with Me. He devotes himself to Me always, and to no other, for I am very dear to that man, and he is dear to Me."

(Adhyaya - 7/20, 23)

The Holy Qur'an has gone a step further by removing the veils that estrange God from man by stating that man (having been bestowed free will) is fully responsible for all his doings, good or bad, but all the actions of man are subject to some divine laws and, it is within this frame work that man's actions are judged, and are rewarded or punished accordingly. This has been clarified by the prophet himself; One day, an Arab presented himself before the Prophet and said that he has no children and requested him for a son. The Prophet said to him that even if he wishes for a small length of yarn he should pray God for how can a mortal like him give any one anything which is not within his power. It is this one speciality that distinguishes Islam from the other religions.

#### **GOD CANNOT BE SEEN WITH THE FACULTY OF HUMAN SENSES:**

(20)/55

The second spiritual truth that has been enunciated in this section is that God cannot be seen with the faculty of human sight. This cardinal principle of belief (in God) is subscribed to by all religions but there are a lot of unbelievers -materialists, who hold that they cannot agree to believe in the existence of a god who is invisible although he may be perceived through our intellect. They hold that it is impossible to comprehend a god in his un-manifest state nor even to contemplate or meditate and offer prayers to a god who is beyond the reach of their mental faculties and senses of perception. Instead of effectively refuting these fallacious arguments the Indian sages have chosen to permit idols worship to satisfy the spiritual urge of the generality of masses. In a way, they have



even upheld the practice of idols worship as in order. Even Bhagavad Gita has compromised but evidently, as only a concession.

Sri Krishna tells Arjuna thus:-

"Men whose discrimination has been blunted by worldly desires, establish this or that ritual or cult and resort to various deities according to the impulse of their inborn natures. But it does not matter what deity a devotee chooses to worship. If he has faith, I make his faith unwavering. Endowed with the faith I give him, he worships that deity, and gets from it everything he prays for. In reality, I alone am the giver."

(ADHYAYA VII/22)

This is the compromise Bhagavad Gita has made with the pristine purity of monotheism prevailing in the age of Upanishads.

When Arjuna implored Sri Krishna that he may show himself in his Divine splendour, Sri Krishna says:-

"But you cannot see me thus with those human eyes. Therefore, I give you Divine sight. Behold ! This is my Yoga power."

Sri Krishna revealed to Arjuna his transcendent Divine Form.

Sanjaya says to Dhritarashtra thus:

"Suppose a thousand suns should rise together into the sky; such is the shape of Infinite God."

(ADHYAYA XI/12)

Bhagavad Gita has thus satisfied the pauranic mentality of insistence of a god visible to let the masses feel elated over the revelation of god in their fanciful material form. The Holy Qur'an has explicitly proved beyond doubt that it is not possible to see God with human sight and senses and yet possible to contemplate, meditate and pray God Who is Omniscient, Omnipresent and Benevolent and this Truth, is implicit in the episode of Moses and the doubting Israelites who insisted on seeing god who is visible.

For example, electricity is invisible but on that count we do not deny its existence as a form of energy which we employ in our daily life profiting from its properties of energy for lighting and mechanical drive. Therefore, is it not sheer ignorance to deny the existence of god because He cannot be seen. Elemental forces, being perceptible to our senses are deified and worshiped which is nothing but delusion born of ignorance. Vidyaranya Swami has ably discussed and defended the proposition that God can be contemplated, meditated and invoked, being <sup>\*1</sup>'Nirguna' and Formless, in his work Vedanta Pancha dasi and Dhyana Dipa Prakarana (also see Vedanta Sara) Vidyaranya Swami has stated; "We have nothing to do with the 'ignorant'". <sup>\*2</sup>

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<sup>\*1</sup> Brahman' in itself is absolutely devoid of qualifications (NIRGUNA) and consequently beyond the reach of the powers of the normal human mind.

<sup>\*2</sup> 'Mudha', (Nadan) opposite of knowledge which is termed appellation 'Avidya' in vedic terminology.

In all the vedas contemplation on the Nirguna and Formless One only is decreed; any interpolations wherever they occur must be withdrawn. "But this explicit truth has not become fruitful in the day-to-day spiritual life of the masses. Even the Christians have adopted Jesus and Mary as worshipful deities; Buddhists worship Buddha and Bodhisatvas and Hindus worshipping thousands of deities (Ishta devatas, images and personifications) is a common sight inspite of the higher ideal of monotheism preached by Vidyaranya Swami. This amply points out to the degeneration of the spiritual perceptions of the people. All this negates the pristine purity of the teachings of Vedas and the vedic times, - the concept of 'Sudha Brahman'. It is folly on the part of man to demand to see god as a condition for acceptance.

In the episode related in the Holy Qur'an concerning the insistence of the Israelites to see god it has been said that in response to the entreaty of Moses a flash of lightning and thunder swept on Mount Sinai which dazed (to death) the on lookers. How is it possible to look at the resplendent Glory of God when we cannot even look at the sun at noon. This is the truth expounded by the Holy Qur'an.

**(21)/ 11/59**

**(TEXT)**

"But the transgressors  
Changed the word from that  
Which had been given them;  
So We sent on the transgressors  
A plague from heaven,  
For that they infringed  
(Our command repeatedly)."

It is important to note that attention is drawn to the fact that the Israelites changed the word of God repeatedly and relapsed into idolatrous ways.

This is a common feature that we have been witnessing in world history. We all know for certain that all the Books that have been revealed to Prophets for the guidance of mankind from time to time have been corrupted and are full of interpolations altogether deviating from the original teachings. The one standing exception is the Holy Qur'an which has been preserved meticulously in its pristine purity since its first revelation to the present day. It is a well known fact that the minor collections which are known by the respectable appellation of <sup>\*1</sup> 'Sruti' have cropped up numerously propounding in their turn mutually contradictory doctrines and laws. In the like manner, there are different versions of Bible in different languages - Greek, Latin, English and Russian introducing many interpolations which fact, is acknowledged by Christian scholars of Biblical studies who are all equally devoted in the matter of their religion. It has been stressed in the Holy Qur'an that Truth proclaimed by all the prophets is one and the same in all ages but their followers changed the word of God after the death of the prophets to serve their vested interests. This is a historical fact corroborated by research scholars of religious studies in all countries.

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<sup>\*1</sup> The orthodox sacred books (sastras) of India are classed into four categories: (1) Sruti (what is heard) the vedas and certain upanishads, (2) Smriti (what is remembered) the teachings of the ancient saints and sages and law books. (3) Puranas and (4) Tantras, concerning themselves with rituals.

## **SALVATION:**

(22)/ Section - 8

11/62

"Those who believe (in the Qur'an)  
And those who follow the Jewish  
(Scriptures)  
And the Christians and the Sabians,  
Any who believe in God  
And the Last Day,  
And work righteousness,  
Shall have their reward  
With their Lord; on them  
Shall be no fear, nor shall they  
grieve."

"Indeed, salvation rests entirely on our belief and personal deeds of righteousness and not on birth, lineage, creed and colour. Whosoever believes in the Truth, - whether they are Jews or Christians or Sabians who worship stars or any other religion - if only they believe in God (Oneness of God), the Last Day of judgement and do righteous deeds, - they shall be rewarded according to the deeds they have performed and shall not suffer any wrong and grief." What a high universal and ennobling ideal of religious tolerance it is!.

Presently, in our country, there are many different languages, differing religions, creeds and customs and even styles of addressing.

Setting aside these differences the real criterion is our belief, in truth that promotes agreeable and healthy attitudes. If only we learn to cultivate a universal and tolerant truth the religious bigotry embedded in our communal psyche will surely disappear. Islam is preaching equality of mankind by stressing the common descent of mankind from Adam and Eve (the first humans on earth) Muslims has no national outlook which is narrow is its very origin. There is an erroneous talk among Indian nationalists who charge Muslims of leanings towards Turkey, Egypt, Arabia and Persia instead of owning Indian nation. They are not correct and it is a grave misunderstanding. The fact is that Muslims have no innate sense of nationalism. The concept of universalism (say internationalism) is a part of their social psyche transcending geographical barriers. The concept of race, colour and country are foreign to their social outlook. To him, a Harijan and a Brahmin are equal; so too, a Chinese Muslim or a Negro of American are the same without any distinction and any bar in their social intercourse with them is unthinkable. All Muslims constitute one UMMA, the brotherhood of Muslims, transcending racial and geographical barriers.

### **MOSES COMMANDED TO ASK HIS PEOPLE TO SACRIFICES A COW:**

(23)/Verse 67

At the end of Section - 8 there is an allegory of Prophet Moses asking his people to sacrifice a cow:

"And remember Moses said  
To his people, "God commands  
That ye sacrifice a heifer,"  
They said, "Makest thou  
A laughing stock of us ? "  
He said; "God save me  
From being an ignorant fool."

Moses told his people that worshipping cow as a deity is a sin. The people of Moses accepted it without faith. It was impossible for them to forsake veneration of cow from their hearts. It was only after Moses had ordered the sacrifice of cow that they were able to give up their ignorant belief of cow worship.

In India, Since centuries, veneration of cow as sacrosanct has come to stay as a part of their spiritual tradition. Agriculture being the main source of life in our country it is only natural that cow has attained this exalted position. Until the beginning of probably, the Buddhist age which brought about a transformation of the Vedic religion, there had never been any prohibition on the eating of beef or sacrificing of cows in the Vedic times even during the times of Mahabharat. This can be proved from numerous Hymns of Rigved. A few of the Hymns are cited below:-

(Rigved - Book - X) Hymns.

- 12- "Never, Indrani; have I enjoyed without my friend Vrishakapi, Whose welcome offering here, made pure with water, goeth to the Gods, Supreme is Indra over all."
- 13- "Wealthy, Vrishakapi, blest with sons and consorts of thy sons, Indra will eat thy bulls, thy dear oblation that effecteth much, Supreme is Indra over all."
- 14- "Fifteen in number, then, for me a score of bullocks they prepare, And I devour the fat thereof; they fill my belly full with food. Supreme is Indra over all."

**NOTE:-** 11- Indra speaks this and the following stanza:

13- Spoken by Vrishakapi to his wife Vrishakapai who is said to represent the dawn or by others, the gleamings which follow the setting sun Vrishakapi.

Similarly the utterances of prominent Rishis: Vrishakapi, Bharadwaja, corroborate amply that sacrificial beef eating was common and permissible as may be evident from the citations below:

(Rigved, Book VI) Hymns

- 46- "The mortal man who serves the God with banquet, and bringing gifts at sacrifice, lauds Agni, May well attract, with prayer and hands uplifted, the Priest of Heaven and Earth, true Sacrificer."
- 47- "Agni, we bring thee, with our hymn, oblation fashioned in the heart. Let these be oxen unto thee, let these be bulls and kine to thee."

(Book X -) Hymn

- 10- "One downward to the water drives the crippled cow, another trims the flesh brought on the carving board, One carries off the refuse at the set of sun. How did the parents aid their children at their task!"

**\*\*** beef eating appears to be common during the times of 'Maha Bharat' as may be observed from the introduction of the Pandava brother, Bhima when he sought employment as a cook in the court of Rajah Virat:

"I, (Bhima) had been in the service of Dharmaja as a slaughterer of cows, cook and restler."  
(Maha Bharat) (Virata Parwam)

In the 'Mantra' entitled 'Dhenwa nadu hore bhakshyam' of 'Dharma Sutra' authored by **\*Apastamba**, it is stated that it is permissible to eat the flesh of cow and Bull. It is further stated that the flesh of 'Bull' is holier. Haridatta, who is a prominent Commentator of 'Gautama Dharma Sutras' writes thus in 'Mitaksharam'.

"The meat of bull is not only permissible but is also holy. This has also been stated thus in 'Bahruca Brahmana' because when offering to an eligible deity, or to a king or a honored guest, a bull may be killed - this custom prevailed in ancient times and is current until now."

Haridatta lived in 12th Century A.D. It is evident that beef eating was in practice during his times. Bhava Bhuti ( ) writes in his 'Uttara Rama Charita' describes (see Section - 4) how a two-year old kine is slaughtered for sacrifice. The eminent poet, Bhattu Murari Kavi also describes such a scene in his work 'Anargha Raghavam' (Section - 2). However, Brahmins in Maharashtra and Dravida consider it sinful to slaughter cows; this may be due to the abiding influence of Buddhism and Jainism. The purpose of citing so many instances from sacred texts is to bring home the truth that beef-eating was permissible.

#### Section - 9:

(24) Surah-II/79: (74-79):

##### TEXT

"Then woe to those who write  
The Book with their own hands  
And then say, "This is from Allah,"  
To traffic with it  
For a miserable price!  
Woe to them for what their hands  
Do write, and the gain  
They make thereby."

##### COMMENTARY.

Section - 9 is about the Scribes who write religious Scriptures is alluded to the Israelites by way of an allegory and applies equally well to all other peoples; this is the way the Holy Qur'an unfolds any erratic practice.

In our country it has become a tradition to ascribe authorship of every Purana, Upanishad or Dharma Sutra to Brahma, or Siva, Vishnu or Agni, an illustrious sage through divine inspiration nay, even miraculous in sanctity in order to gain

public acceptance and veneration. Sectional and denominational rivalry and strife is largely attributable to such erratic practices. Rank jealousy and strife between Saiva and Vaishnava sects and faking Puranas and other sacred texts in support of their conflicting doctrines is a common practice. The Holy Qur'an has condemned these erratic attitudes in Verses 74 - 79 and describing the blunted minds. They are devoid of fear of God and are stone hearted and are hardened sinners.

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**\*\*** Dharma Sutra' is a sacred Book. The Vedic sage, Apastamba (said to/have) lived in 5th century B.C.

**\*** See 'History of Sanskrit Literature' by Sri Malladi Surya Narayan Sastry, Vol-1 P/153-4.

**(25) Section - 9: Verses 80 - 82:**

"The Holy Qur'an is condemning the belief prevailing among an arrogant people that fire will not scorch them because they are a chosen people. This belief, even now, persists among the Jews, and, in our country too, has come to stay in the dogmatic form of caste - division (varna srama chara Dharma) elevating some and depressing the rest. The Holy Qur'an condemns this erroneous belief emphasizing that salvation rests entirely on the acts of virtue and righteous conduct and not on birth or caste.

**(26) Section - 10; Verses 83 - 86:**

Some universally applicable and acceptable moral and ethical laws are ordained; those who infringe are chastised.

**(27) Section - 11: Surah-II/ Verses 87 - 91:**

These verses are addressed to the people of Moses castigating them for their unbelief and falsifying the commands of God and relapsing into idolatrous ways. This is an allegory and has a universal meaning. It has been stressed that the revealed truth is not confined to one religion or one people exclusively. The many Apostles and Prophets ordained from time to time to different people in different countries have proclaimed the same truth wherein is there neither any inconsistency nor contradiction and that all revealed books are mutually complimentary to one another and they have all given a call for unity (of thought) and not designation.

**(28) Verses 92 - 93:**

Rejecting faith after acceptance is castigated as an act of faithlessness, vile and despicable. The Israelites had relapsed into idolatrous act of worship of calf inspite of the covenant they had taken at the foot of Mount Sinai.

**(29) Verses 94 - 96:**

It has again been stressed that salvation cannot be obtained by lineage only but rests entirely on acts of righteousness. This world is a field of action; if it is otherwise, why live at all and for no purpose? Why long for this ephemeral life? How many are there who hesitate to enter the gates to salvation? Their psychic make-up is described by the Holy Qur'an in these words:

'AL - BAQARAH' 96- "Thou wilt indeed find them,  
Of all people, most greedy  
Of life, - even more  
Than the idolators;  
Each one of them wishes  
He could be given a life  
Of a thousand years;  
But the grant of such life  
Will not save him  
From (due) punishment  
For Allah sees well  
All that they do"

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## REVELATION:

### (30) Section - 12 : Surah-II/ Verses 97 - 103:

In this section two important articles of faith are taught: Firstly; that by the command of God, the revelation that has been engraved on the heart of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.H) by the angel Gabriel (Jibraiel) is from God and is the Truth. And secondly, sorcery is an act of unbelief and wickedness leading to hell.

Who is Gabriel? How does he appear in the vision of the Prophets ordained by God to different peoples in different countries? It is not possible to give a full answer to this question. It is a matter of religious experience, - intuition and inspiration, which are not subject to physical laws or rational argument. But it is possible to describe only the physical state of the recipient of revelation at that particular moment as there are supporting authorities - eye - witnesses, narrating the sayings of the prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.H) by his close companions and well preserved in the books of 'Hadis' (Traditions) running into many volumes. The act of 'Revelation (of a message from God) is called 'Wald' in the Arabic language. I have translated this word in Telugu, as: 'Satya sandar sanamu' which literally means in English, as 'Reception of Truth'. It is stated by one of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.H) Al'haris Ibn-e-Hisham, one day inquired "Sir, how do you receive the revelation" The Prophet replied: "At times it comes as a jingling of bells and it sounds harsh and painful; and when it recedes, the Message appears to have been embossed in my memory. At times, the angel (Gabriel) appears to me in the form of a human being and speaks to me which I memorize." Bibi Ayesha, the wife of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.H), has stated thus:

"At the time when the prophet was receiving Revelation, I have seen him; He feels intensely cold and profusely sweats on the forehead." Proceeding on, she said: "He received the first inspiration through a vision before dawn. All his visions were true: Thence on he preferred solitude. That is why he took to the cave of Hira. It was here in the cave that he received the first Revelation. The Angel, Jibra'il appeared to him. The Prophet (p.b.u.H) has said, "I had fallen asleep in the cave of Hira, when the angel Jibra'il appeared to me, and unfolding before my eyes a long strip of silken stuff embroidered with written letters: "Read !" said he - "I am not one of those who read." "He caught hold of me at once, tightening the silken folds round my limbs, mouth and nostrils, with such violence that I could not breathe. I thought that my hour of death had arrived."

"Letting me go, 'he repeated, "Read" - "I am not one of those who read," I answered as before. For the third time, again he clutched me and I felt my last breathe about to escape from my breast. Finally, he loosened his hold and repeated for the third time: "Read" - "What am I to read?" I asked in my affright. It was then that he said to me:



## CXVI 'Iqra'

- 1- \*1"Proclaim: (or Read)  
In the name  
of thy Lord and Cherisher,  
Who created –
- 2- "Created man, out of  
A mere clot  
of congealed blood, -
- 5- "Proclaim ! and thy Lord  
Is Most bountiful, -"

"I recited these words after him. He vanished."

"Until after three years thence no revelation was received. he thought that whatever he had seen or heard may after all was an illusion. However, he remained all those days in deep meditation, preferring solitude. One day, all of a sudden, "while I was walking: I heard a voice and I raised my head. I saw the angel who had appeared to me in the cave of Hira. He was seated on a throne between the sky and the earth. I was frightened. I returned home and said: "Cover me with a rug. Then I heard (through inspiration) these words:

LXXII ('Muzammil')  
(contains (20 Verses)

- 1- "O thou folded  
In garments!
- 2- "Stand (to pray) by night,  
But not all night -
- 3- "Half of it, -  
Or a little less.
- 4- "Or a little more  
And recite the Qur'an  
In slow, measured rhythmic tones.
- 5- "Soon shall We send down  
To thee a weighty Message."

The Holy Qur'an was revealed in this manner, on different occasions, in course of 23 years and 3 months. His immediate companions memorized the verses progressively and a scribe copied in writing during the life time of the Prophet, getting the copies authenticated by the prophet himself.

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\*1 This unforgettable event occurred one night on the 25th/27th/29th of Ramzan when the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.H) was forty (corresponding to 6th January, 611 A.D. These Verses are the first revelation. The next time when Muhammad returned to the cave, Jibr'il appeared again, this time, in the form of a human being, led him to a water course, where he taught him the rites of purification (Wazu) and prayers. Muhammad went through the prayers, - bowing and prostration, as the angel performed with recitation.

## **MAGIC AND SORCERY - PROHIBITED:**

### **(31) Verse - 102:**

The second precept that has been taught in this section is concerning the belief in magic and sorcery which is condemned as a blasphemy. Belief in magic and sorcery is prevailing all over the world. In Europe, witches were burnt at stake. In our country too, belief in magic - black magic and sorcery is prevailing widely. All this is designed to deceive and harm people and that is why it is prohibited in Islam. The power of magic and sorcery is neither natural nor super-natural for nothing happens without the will of God.

Prophet Solomon was a king was ordained as a prophet to his people, and is venerated by the Christians and Jews alike but they fabricated myths and fables round his person. King Solomon was a 'Rajarshi' and the Jews eluded all his power and deeds to his power over the spirits forgetting that all power belongs only to God. 'Haruth' and 'Maruth' named in the Biblical literature, were only astronomers and were good people. The Holy Qur'an says that magic and sorcery ascribed to them is born of unbelief.

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### **(32) Verse - 108:**

The Holy Qur'an says that in matters of spiritual truths philosophical argumentation to falsify is condemned. Even Manu Smriti condemns such people in the following words:

"Scholars who reject sanctified and revealed words of God by logical arguments must be treated as atheists and excommunicated by the learned."

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### **(33) Verse 110 - 113**

The Holy Qur'an is again stressing that only righteous conduct will secure salvation and not outward professions claiming exclusive rights.

## **UNITY OF RELIGIONS:**

### **Section - 14, 15 and 16:**

(34) In these sections religious arrogance is condemned. In the first instance, the Holy Qur'an does not recognize multifarious religions. The sublime truth of the teachings of all Prophets and Apostles is one and has been the same since its first enunciation despite the geographical and territorial barriers. The Holy Qur'an emphasizes that the great teachers who were inspired were all Apostles and prophets of God ordained to different peoples at different ages and therefore it is nothing but folly to dispute their veracity or ascribing superiority of one over the others and in the process, introducing fallacies through interpolations and corruptions of the original <sup>\*1</sup>Scriptures. Sublime teachings taught by the Apostles and Prophet are no exclusive property of any one people; they are the legacy and heritage of all mankind. One may ask, pertinently, how then are these differences that have cropped up? Factually, there are no differences at all in what they convey; the differences lie in our perceptions and practice and that is how the unbelief has crept in. As has already been pointed out in the preceding paras, Christians accepted that God is One and likewise, the Vedic religion has accepted the ONENESS of God, - God as the Supreme Lord, Creator and Sustainer of the worlds. Has Jesus Christ ever proclaimed that he is the God? Or, specifically, that he is the son of God? Has he not prayed and implored on the Cross: "Father, Father, why have you forsaken me?" It is only allegorical in the sense of man's sonship to god and in this sense; God is invoked as the father of all creation - creator and sustainer of all the worlds and everything we see. All religions preach righteousness, righteous in thought, word and deed; all religions have explicit belief in ONE God and righteous conduct wherein there lies NO difference or dispute at all. Then, how is it that we talk of different religions? It is evident that our differences lie in our perception of the sublime truth and its practice. Jesus Christ never claimed that he is a god nor that he is the son of god and it is this basic truth that has been taught by the Holy Qur'an. Is it not a fact that all that is between the earth and the skies has been Created and Sustained by God and obeys the laws imposed by Him? Where then is the need for the Lord to take a son? It is this basic truth that has been enunciated in the Holy Qur'an these

### **Verses 104 - 141:**

It was Prophet Abraham, the ancestor of the <sup>\*2</sup>Jews who constructed Ka'bah as the first house dedicated to Allah and consecrated it as a place of assembly for men and a place of safety. The Muslims have made this sacred place as their centre and in this respect have obeyed the command of God. Why then do the Jews bear enmity for the Muslims and Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.)? The other Prophets who succeeded Prophet Abraham preached the same religion, - the religion of the righteous. The Holy Qur'an has emphasized again and again that birth from a great personage is no qualification for salvation. This has been clearly stated thus in the Holy Qur'an:

11/134 "That was a people that hath  
Passed away. They shall reap  
The fruit of what they did,  
And ye of what ye do."

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<sup>\*1</sup> Hindus claim that many parts of Vedas were lost.

<sup>\*2</sup> Prophet Abraham had two sons; the eldest Ismail and the second Isaac who is also called Isra'il and the Jews are his progeny. Prophet Muhammad is descended from Ismail.

## CHANGE OF QIBLA:

(34) Verse - 142:

### TEXT

142- "The fools among the people  
Will say: "What hath turned  
Them from the Qibla to which  
They were used? Say;  
To Allah belong both East and West;  
He guideth whom He will  
To a way that is straight."

### COMMENTARY.

The direction to which the Muslims turn for prayers is called 'QIBLA' in the Arabic language. In the beginning, during the ministry of Muhammad at Mecca for thirteen years and thereafter, for sixteen months after his migration to the city of Medinah, Muslims regarded Jerusalem as

their Qibla and it lay in the westerly direction. In the midst of prayers God commanded the Prophet to turn in prayers towards the Ka'bah located in Mecca and lying in the easterly direction. Incidentally, majority of the inhabitants of the city of Medinah were Jews who regarded Jerusalem as their Holy city. Now that the Muslims changed their Qibla from Jerusalem to Mecca although it had not come under their rule as yet, the Jews were passing sarcastic remarks and spreading AR RUMours. Another significant fact is that Muslims had established a centre towards which they are commanded to turn in prayers, thus fulfilling an obligation and at the same time, realizing their ideal and aspirations for forging unity signifying universalism of the message of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.H) Direction is not so much that matters; for those who live in West the Kaba is to the south and to those who live in the north, the Ka'bah is to the south and to those who live in the east Ka'bah is to the west; God is all pervading and is the Lord of East and West.

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## **\*PROPHECIES IN BIBLE CONCERNING THE COMING OF MUHAMMAD (P.B.U.H)**

### **(36)/146**

In the Bible there are numerous prophecies concerning the coming of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.H) Jesus spoke: Verse - 146 is relevant.

"He will guide you unto all truth; for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak" (John 16: 13) in the Old Testament (Acts 3-21-22) " Whom the heaven must receive until the time of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His Holy Prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brother like unto me; him shall hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you."

There is no doubt whatsoever that the prediction refers to Prophet Muhammad. This is known to the scholars of both Jews and the Christians.

### **(39) Verse - 158**

'Safa' and 'Marwa' are two hills in the vicinity of Mecca, lying close to the sacred fountain 'Zamzam'. The infant Ismail and his mother, lady Hajirah, the wife of Prophet Abraham, who were left in the desert, were parching with thirst. The lady prayed for water and ran hither and thither and God in His Mercy, in appreciation of her perseverance in faith made a fountain to gush forth. When he grew up he helped his Father Abraham build the Ka'bah, - the first prayer house. During the Annual pilgrimage the devotees pay their homage by performing the ritual of going round and round the two hills in commemoration.

Before the advent \* of the Prophet Muhammad there were idols of male and female deities on the hills. Some of the pilgrim was loathe circumambulating the hills because of the presence of the idols. The Holy Qur'an clarified that it is no sin to circumambulate on this account; the ritual symbolizes the patience and perseverance of lady Hajira in her faith in God. Soon after the city capitulated to the Prophet, the idols were removed.

### **MONOTHEISM:**

#### **(40) Verses 163 - 165:**

In the monotheism expounded by the Holy Qur'an there is absolutely no place for polytheistic thought and trends. God is the Sovereign Lord - Iswara, incomparable, All knowing, the First and The Eternal and all praises are due to Him alone. This has been fully explained and discussed in the preceding part. People may be heard saying: "You have come like a god". "That Mahatma is like a god incarnate", and similar other expressions. It is no exaggeration to say that such people as are considered 'incarnations' may be counted in thousands. There are numerous instances of addressing dead or living people as (Bhagvan' and showing them worshipful reverence. This is not particularly limited to Hindus only or the Christians but is equally applicable to people professing other religions too as a generalized way of life. The Holy Qur'an is strictly prohibiting the usage of such expressions as blasphemy.

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\*Prophecies concerning the advent of the Prophet Muhammad appear in 'BHAVISHYA PURAN' also.

**(41) Verses 168 - 173:**

Foods prohibited and foods permissible are named in this Section.

There is a widely prevalent belief that vegetarian food is of far greater excellence than non-vegetarian food since non-vegetarian food is polluted and demeaned by the stigma of 'Himsa' (killing). As a matter of fact even Brahmins in Bihar, Bengal and Kashmir are known to be accustomed to meat-eating.

In our country, during the period the 'Vedic devotional rituals and rites of 'Yagna/Yaga' were in vogue there never existed any prohibition on meat-eating. In fact it was sanctioned and sanctified and the people belonging to all creeds were freely relishing meat, beef and fish. However, it was in the latter times following the decline of Vedic religion and the spreading influence of Jainism and Buddhism among the Brahmins and Vaisyas the belief of 'Ahimsa' took roots and meat-eating was gradually given up. In the Laws of Manu and other 'Dharma Sutras' we find no prohibition on meat/beef. And at the same time, the excellence of meat-eating is stressed and sanctified in the ritual-offerings of foods on the occasion of sanctified in the ritual-offerings of foods on the occasion of 'Sradha' (offerings to the departed souls of ancestors made monthly or annually) which is enjoined and is solemnly observed by all Hindus.

It has been stated in Manu smriti that the Brahmin conducting the Sradha ritual should first be worshipped and then, offerings of eatables such as pulses, vegetables, fruits, curds and milk and honey be placed in purified utensils as also 'relishing and favorite meats' around the utensils. (See Manusmriti : 3 - 227).

**\*1** In the same Chapter the prescribed period until which the ancestors will remain propitiated is also stated thus:

"Oil seeds different corns, pulses, different vegetable which grow under- ground, fruits are given in charity to the Brahmins the ancestors will remain propitiated for a month.

"The ancestors will remain propitiated for two months in case of charity of fish, in case of venison three months, in case of meat of goat four months, bird's meat relished by mortals for five months.

"In case of charity of mutton, four months, in case of the venison of striped deer, seven months.

"The meat of wild boar and porcupine, ten months, of rabbit, tortoise – for eleven months.

"In case of charity of dairy products related to cow such as curds, milk, ghee, old goats mutton will keep the ancestors propitiated for twelve years.

"Those who perform Sradha rites monthly may also offer excellent meats."

"Different meats offerings must be relished by the presiding Brahmin without any objection and any one conducting the ritual refuses to eat he will be born as a cattle for the next twenty-one years."

(Manue 5 - 35)

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**\*1** Sanskrit text and its translation in Telugu is cited by the author English translation of the text not being available I have made a faithful translation for the benefit of the readers.

Pundit Pendyala Venkata Subrahmanya Satry, in one of his articles published in 'Bharati' says: "As the religious teachings of Jaina had taken roots gradually in our hearts we have been taken unawares without caring to understand what really is taught in the 'Mantras' (Vedic) concerning 'himsa' (slaughtering) ..... "The practice of offering and relishing meats was discussed Sri Madhava Charya (who lived in 14th century A.D.) holds eating of meat and fish as 'sanctioned' and this has been upheld by Sri Ramanand who lived in 16th Century. Apart from the authorities quoted the three great Commentators - Sri Sankara, Ramanuje and Madhava - Charya in the commentary on the Brahma Sutras have upheld the position clearly stating "slaughtering being enjoined and sanctioned it is no sin to eat meats."

B. Sital Prasadji in his book 'Jainism and Buddhism' writes: "In Buddhist and Jaini religions which considers the theory of \*<sup>1</sup>Ahimsa' as its basic teachings, meat - eating is nowhere appears to have been prohibited. In the books known as 'Tripitakas' - Sutta, Vianaya and Abhidhrma meat - eating is not forbidden. Fleash of Elephant, horse, dog, some forest animals is forbidden but fish eating is sanctioned (Vinayaka Pitaka: 218 - 237) Sital Prasadji has also pointed out that Buddha himself ate meats. Edward Thomas, in his Life of Buddha' writes:"

"A meat-eating was made an ethical question, the ritual aspect ceased to have a meaning for the Buddhist. Hence the practice was not in itself condemned, but only in so far as the partaker was in some way contributory to killing or giving pain."

The Holy Qur'an says:

"Eat of what is on earth, lawful and good"  
(2 / 168)

The Holy Qur'an is forbidding the meat of swine, because it is impure:

"He hath only Forbidden you dead meat,  
And blood and the flesh of swine,  
and that on which any other name hath been  
invoked other than that of Allah."  
(2 / 173)

Eating of the flesh of Swine is also forbidden by the Aryan Scriptures vide Manu - 10/159 and Bible also is forbidding the flesh of Swine.

There is another aspect too: the Holy Qur'an is enjoining laws applicable to the humanity at large living in all climatic and geographical conditions and therefore the laws enjoined must necessarily be amenable to practice.

In lands where vegetables cannot be grown in plenty forbidding meat-eating is imponderable. The Holy Qur'an is seen imposing moderation in consumption of food. The purpose of food is to keep the body in health and strength. If it comes to the consideration of the ethical theory of 'Himsa' the biologists have proved that even trees and plants are 'alive' and they too feel pain and pleasure. Sir J.C. Bose has stated that "A plant is an anchored animal and an animal is a walking Plant." (See 'Doctrine of Ahimsa in Hinduism.' an article by Sir P.S. Siva Swamy Aiyer published in `Hindustan Review - Jan 1941).

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\*<sup>1</sup> Himsa' literally means giving pain.

#### **(42) IGNORANCE:**

##### **TEXT**

"When it is said to them  
"Follow what Allah hath revealed".  
They say, "Nay! we shall follow  
The ways of our fathers"  
What ! even though their fathers  
Were void of wisdom and guidance?"  
(170/2 'AL - BAQARAH')

##### **COMMENTARY**

Treading in the footsteps of ancestors bound to custom and tradition without discretion and judgment and wisdom after truth has been revealed is considered as ignorance. The Holy Qur'an gives utmost importance to discretion and wisdom in preference to following blindly the custom and tradition set by their forefathers as ignorance. A custom may not necessarily be sound and good.

#### **(43) FASTING:**

##### **TEXT**

"O ye who believe!  
Fasting is prescribed to you  
As it was prescribed  
To those before you  
That ye may (learn)  
Self restraint"  
(AL - BAQARAH' 2/183)

##### **COMMENTARY:**

Fasting is enjoined on the believers by all religions. The Holy Qur'an has prescribed fasting for one month annually. Laws prescribed by religion are of two kinds; one set for performance of good deeds and the other is for abstinence from sinful works all in thought, word and deed to keep the social fabric clean and free from vice. To guard against evil it is necessary to discipline our sub-conscience and train our

personal and social attitudes accordingly. Abstinence from food and water for fourteen hours-a-day is quite a trying ordeal and living piously in prayers and is in itself an exercise to purify oneself body and soul.

Since the Holy Qur'an was revealed during the month of Ramzan the whole month has been ordained as a sacred month to be spent in prayer and fasting. The following verses 184 - 187 also refer.

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#### **(44) FIGHT FOR SELF-DEFENCE AND IN THE CAUSE OF ALLAH:**

##### **TEXT**

" Fight in the Cause of Allah  
Those who fight you,  
But do not transgress limits  
For Allah loveth not transgressors."  
(`AL - BAQARAH' 2/190)

##### **COMMENTARY:**

War is of two kinds: one is for self-defence and to repel aggression against the weak to safeguard their legitimate rights. This category of war is sanctioned by Islam and it is obligatory on every Muslim to take part in such a war.

The second category of warfare is forbidden wherein limits are clearly defined lest it degenerates into a war of aggression because "Allah loveth not transgressors" Permanence of aggression is much worse than the resulting bloodshed. If they cease war, keep peace. Fighting must be carried on only with these who commit aggression" is the advice of the Holy Qur'an.



A mistaken view is prevalent that Muslims spread their religion through war. The Holy Qur'an is explicit on this point:

**TEXT**

"And fight them on  
Until there is no more  
Tumult or oppression,  
And there prevail  
Justice and faith in Allah,  
But if they cease,  
Let there be no hostility  
Except to those  
Who practice oppression"

(`AL - BAQARAH' 2/193)

"If it had been their Lord's Will,  
They would all have believed, -  
All who are on earth, -  
Wilt thou then compel mankind?"

(`YUNUS' 10/99)

It is evident from the afore stated citations that wars were never waged for establishing or spreading Islam. If the kings in olden days fought battles with Hindu Rajahs it was purely for the lust of riches and ambition to extend their kingdoms and religion had no place in their wars and campaigns. If the aggressor belongs to a particular religion is it fair to blame that religion? Islam was not spread by the sword. Prof. Sir Thomas Arnold has refuted this mistaken notion in his book 'The Preaching of Islam'.

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**(45) ASCETICISM CONDEMNED:**

Normally all religions commend asceticism as the highest ideal but Islam has forbidden this attitude of renunciation of this world. To abandon this world and only wishing well in the Hereafter is not conducive to piety. Muslims pray:

**TEXT**

"Our Lord; give us  
Good in this world  
And good in the Hereafter  
And defend us from the torment  
On the fire"

(`AL - BAQARAH' 2/201)

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**(46) UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD:**

**TEXT**

213 " Mankind was one single nation,  
And God sent Messengers  
With glad tidings and warnings;  
And with them He sent  
The Book in Truth,  
To judge between people  
In matters wherein  
They differed;  
But the people of the Book,  
After the clear Signs  
Came to them, did not differ  
among themselves,  
Except through selfish Contumacy,  
God by His Grace  
Guided the Believers  
To the Truth,  
Concerning that  
Wherein they differed  
For God Guides  
Whom He will  
To a path  
That is straight.

**COMMENTARY:**

Islam has propounded a great doctrine in these two verses and that is of 'Universal brotherhood'. In Islam there is no discrimination of race and country; all countries, all languages and all religions are eligible for equal respect; no race is superior to the other nor the other is inferior to be despised; no feeling that one country is holy and the other is sinful or unholy; no language is deemed superior or inferior; one religion is superior and the rest are worthless is a thought disagreeable to Islam.

Manu, in his dharma sastra, considers that only Aryavart is honourable and fit for the performance of Vedic rituals and the rest of the world is impious and unfair for the performance of the Vedic ritual (See Manu: 2/23) In the like manner all educated gentry is well aware of the status accorded by the Dharma Sastras to the

entire multitude of the people belonging to 'Anarya' or the people outside the pale of Hindu caste-system, classed as 'sudras'. It has been ordained that the names of sudras should be indicative of their status of servitude (2 - 30) and should end with the word: 'Das' meaning slave. They are prohibited as a class from reading and studying 'Sastras' - even the science of economics (Artha sastra) (4 / 19-18), he should not be allowed to be a preacher nor considered for any intellectual profession; he should be placed in menial jobs and he should not be allowed to acquire riches and that he could never be delivered from the social status ordained by god. Such kinds of prohibitions are to be found in numerous Dharma sastras. But in the changing political and economic life it is hardly possible to forcefully enact these prohibitions. But notwithstanding the enormous changes in the socio-economic - political changes that have revolutionized societies, it is a common practice that the Hindu society is even now caste-ridden and caste -conscious to such an extent that they mutually segregate themselves in social intercourse and even at the dining - tables despising one another being touchable untouchable - conscious. Such differences have been totally eliminated by Islam from the sub-conscience of the believers inculcating in them the belief in universal brotherhood. It is this fundamental belief that binds the Muslims in an international society which fact has been publicly recognized even by the Christian Missionaries who are inimical to Islam and Muslims alike.

Writing in an International Missionary Publication: 'Islam and the Race Problem'  
'Dr. Snowkhur Gronje', says:-

"The League of Nations founded on the basis of Muhammad's religion took the principle of equality of all human races so seriously as to put to shame other communities. White man's churches kept closed to colored Christians, a missionary was boycotted on account of his marrying a negro woman and the habit of lynching are often quoted by Muslims as instances of the backwardness of Christian society. The ideal of a League of Human races has indeed been launched by the Muslim Community more early than by any other." (p/90)

Congregation of all human races, even as an ideal, had never been thought of by any of our previous generations. The Muslims have not only placed this ideal as a foremost one but have always come to consider it as an essential article of their faith and we see that the Muslims all over the world constituting an international brotherhood. Dr. Gronje observes:

"The Muslims all over the world show a remarkable unity in most respects, and the importance of their unanimous acknowledgement of the all - embracing system as the ideal of their international community can hardly be over-rated."

"Practically in the Muslim world neither birth nor color has prevented men from reaching the highest positions. Persians, Hindus, Turks, Mongolians, Berbers and Negroes have occupied the most important state offices and acquired the greatest fame in scholarship. Islam offered a chance to all races and all of them have availed themselves of it in the measure of their talents. In the mosques of Mecca, during the Lecturing hours, students and professors with all gradations of complexion; coal-black, green (as the Arabs call a somewhat brighter nuance), brown, yellow and white may be seen fraternally gathering, and the same variety is shown by the citizens of the Holy city, sometimes, even by the members of one family." (p/98)

In spite of the increasing facilities of travel and communication barriers of race and language, feelings of racial discriminations are leading to wars between the nations of the world. In Europe, the Germans claim to be the supreme race treating other as inferiors. In India too there are not only Hindu-Muslim differences over language and religion there are difference among the Hindus too, - racial differences of Aryan and Dravidian and the gulf is widening day by day. The preaching of the Holy Qur'an that all mankind were born of one man and female cuts at the very root of all racial differences that keep men divided against one another.

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FN – 1 Khusru Khan, an important figure during the later Khilji period, was a convert from Telangana, Malik Kafur, the famed general was a convert from Gujrat.

#### **(47) RIGHTS OF WOMEN, DIVORCE:**

Status of women will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter - 5.

Arabic word for divorce is 'Talaq' which means severance of the ties of marriage between wife and husband. In the matter of divorce Islam is very liberal and differs from the Christian law which does not permit a woman to seek divorce but a man may divorce his wife at will. The right to divorce is accorded to women as well in Islam and such a divorce is called 'Qula'.

If a woman honestly feels that she cannot love the man she has married that constitutes enough ground for her to seek dissolution of marriage. Here is an illustration: a woman, Jamila wife of Tabit bin Qais, submitted to Prophet Mohammad that she does not love her husband and therefore, is desirous of seeking divorce. She added: "I do not find anything wrong in his behavior nor any laxity on his part in the due performance of religious rites as a Muslim and yet, she does not love him. She had returned the orchard her husband gave her at the time of their marriage. Prophet Muhammad accepted her plea for divorce." (Bukhari) This is an illustration which goes to prove how much more importance Islam has accorded to the sanctity of married life. So much liberty and freedom of choice Islam has allowed to women has not been accorded by any other religion of the world.

Islam recognizes the sanctity of married life. However, certain limitations have been set at the same time to allow adequate time for cooling off and exploring possibilities of reconciliation for allowing change of minds in favour of a lasting marriage. The narration given above is an ample commentary on the rights of women.

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### **PART - III**

#### **(48) CHARITY:**

Charity is enjoined on all believers as has been stated in the preceding paras. In sections - 36 and 37 a few more underlying secrets have been enunciated. Charity is classified - into four categories: 1- Infaq, 2- Ihsan, 3- Sadqa, 4- Zakat. Verses under Sections - 36 and 37 are relevant, 'Infaq' means being active in acts of benevolence for the love of God and his fellow men, 'Ihsan' means lending a helping hand with wise counsel, finding ways and means to bring solace and comfort without any selfish motto, Sadqa means spending in charity as a mark of thanks-giving or for mitigating suffering. Zakat, is compulsory and is, in fact, a wealth tax ordained by the religion of Islam for spending on the amelioration of the brotherhood of Muslims and, non- Muslims not excluded. It has been expressly commanded that all charity should be made for the love of Allah and should not be negative with a sense of pride or a sense of self aggrandizement, -like coveting worldly honors or fame and fortune, or in the selfish hope of gaining favor of the Lord. Not only this; due respect must be paid to the sentiments of the one who receives your beneficence and his sense of respect should not be injured in any way. And then, the believers are commanded to give in charity only such things as are good, nothing that has been rejected being not good for your own use. The believers are commanded to give in charity only such things they love for themselves.

Who are eligible for charity and alms? Firstly, your poor relatives, orphaned boys and girls, very poor people, travelers, beggars, for ransoming prisoners and for their welfare. Poor can be marked out by their facial expressions reflecting their distress.

**TEXT.**

- 2/261: "The parable of those  
Who spend their substance  
In the way of Allah is that  
Of a grain or corn; it growth  
Seven ears, and each ear  
Hath a hundred grains.  
Allah giveth manifold increase  
to whom He pleaseth;  
And Allah careth for all  
And He knoweth all things."
- 2/262: "Those who spend  
Their substance in the cause  
Of Allah, and follow not up  
Their gifts with reminders  
Of their generosity  
Or with injury, - for them  
Their reward is with their Lord.  
On them shall be no fear,  
Nor shall they grieve."
- 2/263: "Kind words  
And the covering of faults,  
Are better than charity  
Followed by Injury.  
Allah is free of all wants,  
And He is Most Forbearing.-
- 2/264: "O ye who believe!  
Cancel not your charity  
By reminders of your generosity  
Or by injury - like those  
Who spend their substance  
To be seen in men,  
But believe neither  
In Allah nor in the Last Day.  
They are in Parable like a hard  
Barren rock, on which  
Is a little soil; on it  
Falls heavy rain,  
Which leaves it
- (48)/264: "Just a bare stone  
They will be able to do nothing  
With ought they have earned.  
Those who reject Faith."

265: And the likeness of those  
 Who spend their sustenance,  
 Seeking to please Allah  
 And to strengthen their souls,  
 Is as a garden high  
 And fertile: Heavy rain  
 Falls on it but makes it yield  
 A double increase  
 Of harvest, and it receives not  
 Heavy rain, light moisture,  
 Sufficeth it. Allah seeth well  
 Whatever ye do"

### **TEXT.**

(49) / 255:

"Allah! There is no God  
 But He, - the living,  
 The Self-Sustaining, Eternal,  
 No slumber can seize Him  
 Nor sleep. His are all things  
 In the heavens and on earth  
 Who is there cab intercede  
 In his presence except  
 As He permiteth ? He knoweth  
 What (appeareth to His creatures)  
 (As) Before or after  
 Or Behind them  
 Nor they shall compass  
 Ought of His knowledge  
 Except as He willeth.  
 His Throne doth extend  
 Over the heavens  
 And the earth, and He feeleth  
 Nor fatigue in guarding  
 And preserving them  
 Fore He is the Most High,  
 The supreme in glory"

### **COMMENTARY**

This particular verse is known as 'Ayat ul Kursi' or Verse of the Throne. This is considered the Most Glorified and Full of Bliss.

I have translated the word 'Kursi' as, knowledge, Wisdom. This is the view of the great Commentators: Ibn Abbas, Imam Abu Jaffer, Abu Abdullah and the great Sufi Commentator Ibn Arabi supports this view.

**(50) NO COMPULSION IN RELIGION:**

**TEXT**

2/272: "It is not required  
Of thee (O Apostle),  
To set them on the right path,  
But Allah sets on the right path  
Whom He pleaseth  
Whatever of good ye give  
Benefits your own souls,  
And ye shall only do so  
Seeking the "Face"  
Of Allah Whatever good  
Ye give, shall be  
Rendered back to you,  
And ye shall not  
Be dealt with unjustly."

**COMMENTARY**

Incidentally, in connection with charity, it is commanded that we should not practice compulsion in religion by combining charity with preaching of religion.

The Christian missionaries have spread of false view that Islam was spread by sword.

Among the companions of the Prophet there was one who had two sons. He submitted to the Prophet that he be allowed to convert them by force but the Prophet restrained him, saying that it is for Allah to show them light.

There is yet another incident: Hazrat Umar (the second Caliph) had a slave who was a Christian, who would always turn a deaf ear to the preaching's of Hazrat Umar. Exasperated at this continued indifference, finally he said: You may follow your own ways and I cannot compel you."

The incidents narrated above amply falsify the insinuations of the Christian missionaries that Islam was spread by the sword.

**(56) INTEREST:**

`AL - BAQARAH':

**TEXT.**

2/275: "Those who devour usury  
Will not stand except  
As stands one whom  
The Evil One by his touch  
Hath driven to madness,  
That is because they say:  
"Trade is like usury,  
But Allah hath permitted trade  
And forbidden usury  
Those who, after receiving  
Direction from their Lord,  
Desist, shall be pardoned  
For the past; their case  
Is for Allah (to judge)  
But those who repeat  
(the offence) are Companions  
Of the fire; they will  
Abide therein (for ever)

" " " 2/276 - "Allah will deprive  
Usury of all blessing  
But will give increase  
For deeds of charity;  
For He loveth not  
Creatures ungrateful  
And wicked.

- “ “ ” 2/278 - “O ye who believe!  
Fear Allah, and give up  
What remains of your demand  
For usury, if ye are  
Indeed believers.”
- “ “ ” 2/279 - “If ye do it not,  
Take notice of war  
From Allah and His Apostle  
But if ye turn back  
Ye shall have  
Your capital sums:  
Deal not unjustly.”
- “ “ ” 2/280 - “If the debtor is  
In a difficulty,  
Grant him time  
Till it is easy  
For him to repay  
But if ye permit it  
By way of charity  
That is best for you  
If ye only knew”
- “ “ ” 2/281 - “And fear the Day  
When ye shall be  
Brought back to Allah  
Then shall every soul  
Be paid what it earned,  
And none shall be  
Dealt with unjustly”

### **COMMENTARY**

Herein Islam has prohibited interest. Economists all over the world ascribe all existing economic evils to the institution of interest and are forcefully pleading for the abolition of interest and the force with which Islam has condemned usury or interest calls for immediate attention. All religions have forbidden interest. Aristotle has condemned interest in his book 'Laws' and so too, Plato. Aristotle in his 'Law' says: "The most hated sort, and with the greatest reason, usury, which makes a gain out of money itself and not from the natural use of it. For money was intended to be used in exchange but not to increase at interest. And this term Usury, which means the birth of money, is applied to

the breeding of money because the offspring resembles the parent. Wherefore of all modes of making money this is the most unnatural."

"Plato condemns usury with equal emphasis; he excludes it in the Laws, from the Ideal City described therein."

"In B.C. 312 interest was abolished altogether by Lex Gemucia. Although the prohibition of interest long remained Law, it was found impracticable.... The Lex Unciaria of the Consuls Sulla and ReRugus fixed the rate of interest at 12% per annum by a Decree of the Senate in B.C. 50. This became the legal limit throughout the Roman Provinces. Those who charged more"

(Palgrave's Dictionary of were punished. Political Economy)



In ancient Egypt also there were numerous bars against charging of excessive interest.

A renowned modern economist, Sir Norman Angell's, in his book: "Story of Money" writes:-

"One of the greatest events in the Story of Money is the change of ethical attitude in reference to loans and interest thereon, and all that Ecclesiastical ruling on such a matter implies. We find it difficult to-day to realize that for long ages nearly all the great moralists and teachers, nearly all the great religious bodies, including the Roman Catholic Church, condemned the charging of interest as a vile crime comparable only to murder. It was no casual or incidental condemnation with which the Church and for centuries, the secular state as well, visited this offence. The heinousness has been the subject of a vast literature; of disputations carried on ardently from generation to generation, and age to age."

In this very manner the leaders of the Christian clergy have also condemned usury. Let us see what the Bible says:-

"If thou lent money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shall not be to him as a usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury."

(Exodus. 22: 25)

"Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury, but into thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it."

(Deut. 23 - 20)

"He that hath not given forth upon usury, neither had taken any increase, that has withdrawn his hand from inequity, hath executed true judgement between man and man."

(Ezek. 18 - 8)

"Hath given forth upon usury, and had taken increase; shall he then live? He has done all those abominations, he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him."

(Ezek. 18 - 13)

The words of Jesus contain allusions to lending and borrowing, but as should expect of one who refused to be a judge and divider (Luke - 12-14) there are no direct precepts to guide the Christian conscience. (John Dow in the Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics.)

In the great Council of Christian Clergy held in Vienna in 1310 A.D. usury was completely forbidden. The eminent Christian Reformer, Martin Luther has condemned usury / interest in there words:

"Usury is a great huge monster, like were-wolf, who lays waste all, more than any cacus, Geryon or Autacus - Since we break on the wheel, and behead highwaymen, murderers and house-breakers how much more ought we to break on the wheel and kill, hunt down, curse and behead all usurers."

(Quoted by Marx, Capital Vol. II p/652)

In the European Continent during the Middle Ages, Commercial law was founded on the <sup>\*1</sup> doctrine of prohibition of interest. But progressively the Clergy, unable to withstand the pressures of capitalist expansion finally removed all bars on the charging of interest. In this context Ashley says:

“The prohibition of interest was clearly the centre of Canonist Doctrine. That prohibition, as is ordinarily interpreted, and indeed as it was actually formulated in some few passages by some of the Fathers, would have prevented every sort of investment for the sake of gain.. (But soon) methods were found which did not conflict with the prohibition of Usury, and which, one after the other received the approval of the Church.”

(Ibid p/396)

By 14th Century the Christian Church removed all bars on the charging of interest. By 15th Century the Christian clergy was in unanimous <sup>\*2</sup> agreement with interest. In this way they have corrupted and abrogated a great Law of the Lord. This is an instance of how the Christian Clergy and Church alike have corrupted the teachings of Christ. In 1545 A.D. the King of England, Henry VIII promulgated a law allowing the charging of interest @ 10% per annum. Speaking in the parliament, Mr. Crolle said:

“Now I will speak of the great and intolerable Usury which at this day reigneth so freely this realm over all. Alas, that over any Christian Assembly should be so void of God's Holy spirit that they should allow for Lawful anything that God's word forbideth. Be not abashed worthy Counselors, to call this act into question again.”

And again with regard to the Biblical Command I am not ignorant what glosses have been made upon this place, and how men have wrested and made it no precept but a Counsel of our Saviour; and therefore not to infer necessity to Christians but to leave them at liberty either to do it or to have it undone. Oh. Merciful Lord! 'What manner of religion is it that these men profess' —. and doubt ye not, most worthy Counselors, whatsoever he is that will defend or teach that any one little iota of the Counsels of Christ should be so vainly spoken that any of His flock might refuse to practice the same in his living to the uttermost of his power in no less than a member of the Devil and a very Antichrist.”

(Quoted by Ashley)

In France laws relating to the prohibition of interest were not removed until 1789. In England laws on prohibition of interest remained until 1839 on the Statute Book.

In India, during the times of Rigved, the abominable practice of interest appears to have been in vogue as from a reference to Hymn-341 of Rigved. Dr. Baradial Keith, writing in 'Cambridge History of India', says:

"The rate of interest is unknown, a reference to payments of an eighth or a sixteenth may be referred to either to interest or installments of principal. At any state, the debtor might be as a result be reduced to slavery, as we learn from an interesting Hymn (X / 34) where an unsuccessful dicer recites the fatal fascination for him of the dice and his consequential ruin and enslavement with its results for his family.”

(The Cambridge History of India, Vol.1 p/98)

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<sup>\*1</sup> On the fundamental points of usury and just price, Commercial Law in the later Middle Ages adopted completely the principles of the Canonists." (Ashley, Economic History Vol. 1, Part-II p/384)

<sup>\*2</sup> During the following, the fourteenth, it could hardly be regarded as distinctly under the ban of the Church; and in the 15th it was certainly very generally accepted by the best theologians." (Ashley, p/4011)

Apparently, the authors of Dharma Sutras, have placed prohibitions on interest/usury. Manu says that even in times of distress Brahmins and Kshatrias should not adopt the profession of the trade of Usury. (Manu IV)

In another place Manu specifically condemns gains out of usury are like food mixed with human excretions and defiled."

Another prominent author of Dharma Sutras, 'Apastamba' (9, 18, 22) ordains that food from the usurer should not be accepted. All other authors of Dharma Sutras -Vishnu - Narad, Yagnvalky, likewise prescribe 'Penitence' also for those who live by the trade of usury. It has also been specifically stated that the following categories of debtors need not pay the sums of usury: Those who are pious and perform yagnas, the dead, students who reside with their teachers, minors, and people who are distressed by poverty.

N.N. Law, observes in his "Studies in Ancient Hindu Polity" 'Heterodoxy in the affairs of religion again prevented uniformity in religious thought. For instance, for the "Vaisyas," trading in interest has been made permissible and it has also prescribed the different rates that are to be charged from different castes: charging of 2% per annum interest does not make one obnoxious. Notwithstanding this volte-face, it has been made legitimate to charge 2% per annum from Brahmin, from Kshatriyas @ 3% per annum, from Vaisya 4% per annum and from the Sudras 5% is made permissible. 15% may as well be charged according to the author of Artha Sastra (Kautilya) See Manu (8 - 142), Yajnavalkya (2/37, 1, 2) Vishnu (9-2) Narad (1/99).

During the time of Buddha, although Buddha did not prohibit Usury and it is evident from the Jataka stories that merchants in the trade of usury were not considered respectable. It is also stated in Jataka stories that only cheat and deceitful persons deal in usury. Megasthenes, the Grecian traveler who visited India in 4th Century B.C. says that nobody takes usury. Probably this was not correct; he might not have taken notice of the fact that lowly persons were in the business of usury. On the whole it is beyond doubt that usury was practiced in all countries in all ages in spite of the fact that it was mean.

Prohibitions relating to usury are very much concerned with the economic life of the community but the teachers of religion glossed the practice and treated it or negated it and as a result of such perversity man was reduced to a machine to increase wealth, fleecing the poor and exploiting them mercilessly by lending them money and thriving on their misery. Writing on the agricultural indebtedness, the economists have calculated that as ryots (Peasants) are indebted to the tune of Rupees nine hundred crores and pay as much as 225 crore rupees annually on account of interest. During last war (1914 - 18) England and France owed America billions of Dollars and were known to have been paying millions of Dollars in interest and at times, not being able to service interest charges, humbled themselves before the American Government for the concession of time scheduling.

It was realized that the growth of capitalism was entirely dependent on usury (interest) Where the entrepreneur is handicapped by shortage of capital to run the enterprise or float an industry he invariably looks to a financier or financial institution for more capital and entirely depends upon the <sup>\*1</sup> capitalist. This is precisely the reason why Carl Marx has prohibited interest. In the surplus value the capitalist earns interest is included and is deplored as <sup>\*2</sup> 'an illegitimate tax' on the labouring poor says John Dow. Interest or usury makes the rich richer and the poor the poorer and this destabilizes society. In the socialist economics there is no place for usury.

"All extant Capital is accumulated or capitalised interest; for interest is nothing more than one fragment of surplus value."

(Kark Marx, Capital, Vol.II p/646)

Supporting the above view, Karl Marx wrote an article in 'Economist' which clarifies the view further:

"Capital with compound interest on every portion of capital saved is so all engrossing that all the wealth in the world from which income is derived, has long ago become the interest on capital."

There are the rich people who defend themselves saying that surplus value earned is the fruit of capital they saved without enjoying on personal luxury. To such ones, Karl Marx ridicules and says:

"It has never occurred to the vulgar economists to make the simple reflection that every kind of human activity can, if you like, be regarded as 'abstinence' from the opposite kind of activity. Eating is abstinence from fasting, walking is abstinence from standing, work is abstinence from idleness and idleness is abstinence from work, and so on. These gentlemen would do well to ponder, once in a way, Spinoza's dictum, "determination is negation".

There are classes of economists who defend usury as an incentive to prompt one to accumulate and if there is no incentive nobody will accumulate wealth. Even if one accumulates wealth he may not invest it in industrial enterprises which stifles industrial progress National wealth comes to a standstill, and the desire for a higher life style comes to a stop, and all avenues for attaining higher standards of life melt out like a dream and people will have to remain satisfied with rural civilization. Until recently this has been the view of the economists. All such arguments have been effectively demolished by one of our foremost economists - an economist of international standing -John Maynard Keynes and his book "The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money". Economists all over the world were surprised to note the virtual condemnation of interest. Keynes stated that "increase in interest rates will not increase the inflow of capital because it bears no relation to the volume of capital in the market The only way to overcome all our economic ills is to decrease the interest rates. The economists have now opened their eyes.

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<sup>\*1</sup> Grimm defines "Capitalist" as a man who lends out money on Usury.

<sup>\*2</sup> "The early attacks on usury were motivated by the Church's sympathy for the oppressed poor; the latest attack finds its strength in the plea that interest is an unjust tax on laboring classes. By interest then, the rich are made richer and the poor poorer and the stability of social organization is disturbed."  
(John Dow in the 'Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics').

These days some prominent Americans are adopting the new Philosophy of 'Mutualism'. According to this Philosophy until usury is completely abolished it is impossible to attain social justice. To demonstrate how unjust usury is \* Clarence Swartz has given an arithmetical illustration:

"In 1612 John Aldon borrowed one hundred dollars at five usury rate. By 1926 the family of Eledon was indebted to the tune of one billion dollars". Arithmetically the computation is correct."

\* If John, of Pilgrim Father fame, back in 1626, had lent the equivalent of \$ 100 in coin to Miles Standish, at 5% per annum, to be compounded annually, principal and interest, to be paid to his heirs, after 300 years, the heirs of Miles Stanfish would now have to pay to John Alden's heirs the sum of a little more than \$ 100,000,000 for 300 years. The computation is mathematically correct and serves to demonstrate the anti-social nature of the exaction of interest."

(Clarence L.Swartz, 'What is Mutualism?' p/64)

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One of the most prominent Professor at Oxford University, Frederick Soddy, one of the most distinguished and certainly one of the bravest British Scientists, lately astonished the scientific world by advocating 'the absolute abolition of interest' as the only alternative to the destruction of civilization.

Several years ago, after a visit to Muscle Sholes where, in the company of Henry Ford he talked over the problem. Thomas A. Edison, the greatest inventive genius of modern times, drafted a plan by which the Government could lend money to the farmer for a period of one year without interest charge, to be secured by farm products. The plan was to operate as a sort of auxiliary to the Federal Reserve System. The fact that the two such great minds, in different countries and with different environments, but at almost the same time, reach the epoch- making conclusion that 'the necessity exists for the abolition of interest' must produce a profound impression on thinking people"

(C . L . Swarty, Ibid p/64).

Prof Frederic Soddy destroys the pretense that interest is necessary in his pamphlet 'Cartesian Economics (London, Hendersons) and in his book, 'Wealth, Virtual Wealth, and Debt. (New York - E.P. Dutton & Co.)

The central idea in the doctrine of Mutual Banking is mutual aid and cooperation. There is no interest; all expenses are borne by the members of the bank and on the money advanced for business no more than half-a-percent is spent. The operational procedures have been described in greater detail by Col. William Green in his book, 'Mutual Banking'.

In the context of total abolition of interest many doubts and problems confronted and the way to tackle are very well discussed in the book, 'Individual Liberty' (p/102 to 106) and this book was published from New York in 1926.

I have discussed how the idealists and writers and poets and professors of political economy have condemned usury and all religions have unanimously condemned the practise of usury. Islam has gone a step further by declaring that those who pay usury are equally guilty of the crime along with those who write document, witness the agreement and stand surety. The Holy Qur'an has declared that charging interest is tantamount to making war on Allah and His Prophet. This is one main reason why the Muslims forego receipts of millions of rupees falling due on postal Savings Accounts as interest annually as has been revealed by the Banking Enquiry Committee.

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In this context study of following books is recommended:-

1. Benjamin R. Tucker ----- 'Individual Liberty'
2. Charles P. Issac ----- 'The Menace of Money Power'
3. Hugo Bilgram ----- 'The Cause of Business Depression'
4. Col. William B. Green ----- 'Mutual Banking'.
5. J.B. Robinson. ----- 'The Economics of Liberty'.
6. Joshia Warran ----- 'True Civilization'.

JEWS are known everywhere throughout the world as lending money on interest in spite of the prohibition specifically found in the Old Testament, Now they have recognized that usury is mean and not respectable. J. Abelson, has observed in 'The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics' thus:

"The trade of Usury is looked upon with shame and the Usurer is stigmatized as a reproach to the people. In some Jewish Communities to day the money- lender is forbidden to have any voice in the affairs of the synagogue and is socially tabooed by the better classes among his co-religionists."

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#### **(57) / 276: INGRATITUDE:**

In is significant to note the sentence in the verse:

"He loveth not creatures ungrateful and wicked."

"To charge usury and desist from giving alms is an act of ingratitude." Says the Holy Qur'an. If we ponder over this verse, we will know that usury is the anti-thesis of charity. All prosperity is bestowed only by God and it must be spent in charity in the way of God. Miserliness or accumulating wealth by lending is reprehensible.

#### **(58)/ 277: ZAKAT.**

Payment of Zakat is enjoined on every believer. The command has been repeated in 27 verses and, alongside, "Keep steadfast in prayers and pay Zakat" Zakat is money obtained from the rich for disbursement among the eligible poor and needy for the creation of an egalitarian society and to eliminate beggary.

#### **(59) : DEBTOR.**

Islam exhorts the believers to be modest in their spending and to live within their means. In an extreme need one may have to seek loan. "My Lord, keep me away from debts and faults" was one usual prayer of the Prophet. A man from the gathering once submitted, "O Prophet how is it that you constantly pray Allah to keep you away from debts?" The prophet replied, "Yes, I do" and added that it is because a man in debt has perforce to lie and fail to fulfill promise. "In times of dire need and distress it may become necessary to borrow. In that case, the lender should deal the needy with kindness".

A few more such precepts are mentioned below:

- " When selling or buying be generous and kind. Allah showeth Mercy to such as those who behave with kindness and generosity."
- " When the debtor is in distress the lender should give him more respites until his situation has eased; and, better still, if the lender voluntarily releases the man from the burden of debt. Allah has promised that He will save such men from the fire of Hell."
- " The best amongst you is the one who clears the debts in time." "Delay in return of loan borrowed amounts to aggression."
- " One who borrows with an intention not to return is a reprehensible person" says the Prophet.

#### **(60) CONTRACTS AND DEEDS:**

Verses 282 and 283 are about contracts.



"In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful."

### **THE FAMILY OF IMRAN**

This Chapter was revealed when the prophet was living in Medinah. There are 200 verses in this. Some have computed the number to be 190. I have followed the 'Royal Edition of Egypt' and this is followed by Anjuman-e-Himayat-e-Islam.

In this Chapter the name of Imran, father of Prophet Moses has been mentioned and thus the Chapter takes its name 'Al-i-Imran'. In the first 83 verses there is a discussion about Christianity.

After the Prophet had arrived in Madinah a delegation of sixty Christians from the city of Nazran under the leadership of Abdul Masih waited on the Prophet for a discussion. Nazran is a city near Madinah and was the seat of the Christian Church. The first eighty three verses were revealed in that context.

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**(61)** "Taurat" has been named as the Book revealed to Prophet Moses and there are frequent references to this Book in the Holy Qur'an. It is necessary to understand more clearly what is meant by 'Taurat'. The part known as 'the Law' of old Testament is called <sup>\*1</sup> 'Torah'. At present, the first five parts included in the Old Testament i.e. Gen e sis, (2) Ex o dus, (3) Leviticus (4) Numbers (5) Deuteronomy.

It was generally believed that 'Laws' was the Scripture revealed to prophet Moses but recent researches by Western scholars have established beyond doubt that the numerous parts of the Old Testament supposed to have been revealed to Moses had been extensively interpolated and that the original had been lost altogether a long time ago. An ancient Biblical Scholar <sup>\*2</sup> observed:

"In like manner also Judas (Maccabeus) brought together in addition to all the things that we lost by reason of the war we had and they remain with us."

Evidently, the portion lost as a result of war must have been composed afresh at a much later time.

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<sup>\*1</sup> The old Testament is divided into three parts: i- Law (Torah)  
ii- Prophets and iii- the writings 'Psalms'.

<sup>\*2</sup> Quoted in Mathew Arnold: 'God and the Bible' P/106.



It has now been established beyond doubt that the Old Testament named 'Torah' is not the one that was originally composed by Moses and not until as late as 36 B.C. When the Jews returned from Babylon compilation of Torah began; some were compiled in much later times and they could not sift the original from the interpolated ones that had come into vogue by then. Consequently, they committed numerous errors giving rise to numerous complications and controversies. For example, many books forming part of Apocryphal do not appear in the modern English Bible and since they were found to have been interpolated they were rejected by the scholars. In the Council of Trent held in 1546 A.D. it was decreed:

" He is also to be anathema, who does not receive these entire books, with all their parts, as they have been accustomed to be read in the Catholic Church and are found in the ancient editions of the Latin Vulgate, as sacred and Canonical."

One of the most competent scholars who commented on this view, Dr. Charles says:

" The weight of the scholars in general will attach to this decree cannot but be influenced by the fact, that the Prelates who formed this Council none came from Germany or Switzerland or from any of the Northern countries; none knew Hebrew, only a few had some knowledge of Greek, and there were so many whose knowledge of Latin was of a doubtful character."\*<sup>1</sup>

Protestant Church accepts only books in Hebrew.

" Scholars are far from unanimous as to the original language, date and place of compilation of some of these books .....\*<sup>2</sup>

It has been known that the original Scripture revealed to Moses was destroyed and, some time in 457-8 B.C., Ezra compiled a scripture. The original version of 'Torah' must have been in Hebrew. One of the MS of Old Testament considered to be the most ancient is of 916 A.D. After the Jews had been exiled to Babylonia Hebrew fell into disuse and they had gradually adopted Greek and it was one reason why they translated their Scriptures into Greek. At present, the Books that are considered to be authentic are two: 1) Septuagint (in Greek) and compiled by seventy scholars who lived at different times and at different places. This task must have been commenced in 284 B.C. And Vulgate, which is in Latin, was compiled by St. Jerome in 5th century A.C. These two compilations are mutually conflicting. In Vulgate too there are controversial parts. At last, it was in 1592-1605 A.C. that Pope Clement VIII finally edited and published the same and which is still current in the Roman Catholic Church.

It is evident from the above discussion that the original of the Old Testament does not exist and whatever scriptures that are available in Hebrew are mutually conflicting and there are vast differences between the Greek version accepted by the Jews and the Latin version accepted by the Roman Catholic Church. It was in this manner that the original scriptures revealed to Moses and the prophets who preceded him have long been lost and forgotten and the ones that are existing are erroneously believed to be authentic by Christians.

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\*<sup>1</sup> Charles "Religious Development between Old and New Testament" P/186.

\*<sup>2</sup> ibid

## `INJEEL' (NEW TESTAMENT)

Even as the Books of the old Testament were lost and compiled in later times the part of the Bible known as the New Testament now current was also lost and compiled afresh at different times at different places approximately a hundred years after the death of Jesus and evidently, are not the original Scripture revealed to Jesus. Even those compilations are not in their original shape. As a matter of fact precepts of Jesus are not in the language of his times; they are all translations from one language to the other and there have been innumerable changes. In this context, Matthew Arnold, \*<sup>1</sup> has observed:-

"In short, to know accurately the history of our documents is impossible, and even if it were possible we should not know accurately what Jesus said and did; for his reporters incapable of rendering it, he was so much above them. As to the character of the documents, however, it must be remembered that none of the recorders we have, probably, the very original record. The record when we first get it, has passed through at least half-a-century, or more, of oral tradition, and through more than one written account." ..... "But when did the New Testament, in that written form in which we possess it, come to be recognized as Scripture like the Old Testament? Clearly the documents composing it appeared at different times, and were not published to the world as one authorized whole called the New Testament. Clearly there was a time when they had not acquired the authority they possessed afterwards; when people preferred, for instance to any written narrative, the oral relations of eye-witnesses."

Long after the demise of the disciples Jesus Christ and the elders who carried the traditions at Jerusalem a great Christian scholar, Papias of Hierapolis published a book under the title: An exposition of the Sayings of the Lord' in the year 145 A.C. in order to prevent any fallacies that had come to take root. At this \*<sup>2</sup> time there was no such Book as New Testament and if there had been one, he would certainly have mentioned it. In 180 A.C. another great Christian scholar, Irenaeus, mentioned four Gospels. \*<sup>3</sup> Before that even such great Christian scholars as Ignatious, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Clement of Rome make no mention of the four Gospels.

In 397 A.C. and 419 A.C. two Synods had assembled. In this Synod, for the first time, a New Testament was established. In 383 A.C. another great Christian scholar, St. Jerome, under the orders of Pope, published Latin translation of the Four Gospels. The adverse comments made by St. Jerome in the Synod of Carthage, calls for careful attention. He said: that the nineteenth book of the Bible now current (To the Hebrews is not recognised as authentic by the Christians (speaking Latin) that Gospel of John is not recognised by the Greek Church, that 22nd book (St. Peter) is not recognised by many and that the 22nd Book known as Epistle of James, is considered corrupted and that the 26th book (Jude) is not acceptable to many, and that three books (24, 25 and 27 numbers) were not written by St. John the Elder. \*<sup>4</sup> In this way, it is evident that seven out of the 27 books were not recognized as authentic until the beginning of the 5th Century A.C. In spite of this the Christian Church decreed that these be recognized as authentic. Not only Jerome but also scholars like Eusebius and Origen say that in their times many of the books included in the New Testament of present day were not treated as authentic.

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\* <sup>1</sup> Matthew Arnold: 'God and the Bible' P/96-97.

\* <sup>2/3</sup> Benjamin W. Bacon: 'The Making of the New Testament' P/131

\* <sup>4</sup> But we look in vain in Justin Martyr Or Polycarp Or Ignatius Or Clement of Rome, either for an express recognition of the four Canonical Gospels, such as we have given from Churchmen who lived later for a distinct mention of any one of them."

Now let us know about the four Gospels: During the time of Papias (145 A.C.) probably only St. Matthew and St. Mark were the only two books considered authentic. During 100 A.C. the original of Matthew was considered in Palestine as corrupted. After these three translations, two in Greek and one in Aramaic appeared. Probably, there could be more translations but most of it was incorporated from St. Mark, written by St. Mark at Rome. St. Mark was not a disciple of Christ; he transcribed only such of the precepts of St. Peter about the life and teachings of Christ in the form of a Gospel after the death of St. Peter. Although the precepts were related not in any sequence but suited a particular occasion and were not meant for compiling a Gospel. The Gospel itself was not compiled during the life time of St. Peter but after his death. St. Luke has also drawn his material from St. Mark. It is beyond doubt that all the three authors had drawn their material from some earlier book. Notwithstanding this it may be mentioned that the original Gospel of Matthew was lost and only translations thereof were consulted. So much so that the original Gospel of Jesus Christ gradually lost its importance and \*<sup>1</sup> Gospels about him gained prominence and acceptance.

The Book containing the Gospel of Jesus Christ is not with us. In the books that were available then there is no mention of Crucifixion of Christ on neither the Cross nor his subsequent resurrection and on this point, there is quite a wide agreement among the Christian scholars. Therefore it has become necessary to incorporate historical material as well on the life of Jesus Christ along with his Gospel. This is the reason why Matthew and Luke incorporated the idea of historical aspect which was not available before. Benjamin W. Bacon \*<sup>2</sup> has observed:

"There is outside of Mark no considerable amount of historical material, Canonical or uneconomical, for the story of Jesus. (in short, incorrect, - incorrect as they know the order of Mark to be, it was the best that could be had in the days when evangelists began to go beyond Syntagms (collections of Jesus' teachings), and to write "Gospels" as we understand them, or, in their own language, "the things which Jesus began both to do and to teach." --- B. Bacon P/140.

In 45 - 50 A.C. when efforts were being made to establish the Church of Rome Matthew started gathering the teachings of Jesus but it is not the Book known in our present day as the Gospel of Matthew nor even its translation. To substantiate this statement there are three reasons: (1) to begin with it was neither Epistles nor was it a life of Jesus. (2) Matthew must have originally been written in Aramaic language whereas the original source of the present day's Gospel of Matthew was in Greek. (3) The earliest book written must have been an Apostle of Jesus but the author of Matthew entirely depends on the compilation of Mark who was not an apostle.

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\*<sup>1</sup> "It was impossible to be blind to the conquests made by the Gospel about Jesus. Enclosed in it, as part of its substance the 'Gospel of Jesus' found its final resting place, much as the mother church itself was later taken up and incorporated in a Catholic Christendom." (Benjamin W. Bacon)

\*<sup>2</sup> "The Making of the New Testament. P/137.

"Over and over again special additions are made in Matthew to emphasize a warning against the workers of 'Lawlessness'." (Bacon P/149)

The same may be said about the other Gospels:

"The Gospel of Mark is no exception to the rule that Church writings of this type inevitably undergo recasting and supplementation until the advancing process of canonization at last fixes their text with unalterable rigidity. Whether we recognize 'sources' or earlier 'forms' or only earlier 'editions' of Mark, it is certain that appendices could still be attached long after the appearance of Luke, and it is probable that in the early period of its purely local currency at Rome the found of Petrine anecdote had received more than one adaptation of form before it was carried to Syria and embodies substantially as we now have it in the composite Gospels of Matthew and Luke." (ibid P/170)

In this manner regarding each of the issues much more can be written concerning the different times the Four Gospels were written as spelt out authoritatively by the Biblical scholars:

NAME OF THE GOSPEL	NAME OF THE BIBLICAL SCHOLAR WHO DETERMINED THE TIME OF AUTHORSHIP	TIMES
1- ST. MATTHEW	Baur. C.R. Castlin	105 - 110 A.C The present day form 90 – middle of 100 - original source
	Hilgenfeld	7 - - 80 A.C.
2- ST. MARK	C.R.Castlin	100 A.C.
	Kiem	100 A.C.
	Hilgenfeld	100 A.C.
3- ST. LUKE	Baur	150 A.C
	Zeller	130 A.C.
	Hilgenfeld	120 A.C.
4- ST. JOHN	Baur	160 A.C.
	Kiem	110 - 117 A.C.

How can the Gospels compiled a hundred years or more after the death of Jesus be considered direct revelations from God? Moreso, when these were compiled by different authors in different times, at different places, in different languages in the form we have inherited the Bible current present day is not the original word of God nor was it compiled by Jesus or his disciples during his life time as the original one was altogether lost is the point I have stressed and have written in so much detail to prove my point. Those of the readers in quest of truth may consult the following publications by Biblical scholars of undoubted reputation:

## NEW TESTAMENT:

R.W. Mackay	***	Rise and Progress of Christianity.
G.R.S. Mead	***	The Gospel and the Gospels.
B.W. Bacon	***	Making of the New Testament
R. Hone	***	The Apocryphal New Testament.
E. Reuss	***	History of the New Testament. (2 Vols)
P. Wernle	***	The Beginnings Christianity. (2 Vols)
O. Pfeiderer	***	Christian Origin (4 Vols)
W. Wreds	***	The Origin of he New Testament (An admirable Primer)
Matthew Arnold	***	Literature and Dogma God and the Bible

## OLD TESTAMENT:

G.F. Moors	***	Literature of the Old Testament
G.E. Hammond	***	Outlines of Textual Criticisms
Matthew Arnold	***	Literature and Dogma God and the Bible
R.H. Charles	***	Religious Development between the Old and New Testaments.

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## **(MAHKUMAT' AND 'MUTA SHABIHAT'** **(Fundamentals) (Allegorical)**

(62) /7 There are two categories of verses in the Holy Qur'an: (1) Mahkumat and (2) Allegorical, as stated in the following Verse:-

### **TEXT**

III/Verse – 7 "He it is who has sent down  
To thee the Book;  
In it are verses  
Basic or fundamental  
(Of established meaning);  
They are the foundation  
Of the Book; others  
  
Are allegorical But those  
In whose hearts is perversity follow  
The part thereof that is allegorical,  
Seeking discord, and searching  
For its hidden meanings  
  
But no one knows  
The hidden meanings except God,  
And those who are firmly grounded  
In knowledge says: "We believe  
In the Book, the whole of it  
Is from our Lord: "and none  
Will grasp the Message  
Except men of understanding"

'Mahkumat' are verses which have enunciated and decreed basic or the fundamental codes, clear and precise, without doubt or ambiguity that could possibly lead to any misinterpretation and the other, 'Mutashabihat' which are allegorical and figurative, in the language of simile and metaphor providing strength and qualifying commentary to the 'Mahkumat' verses. On this point all commentators the learned divines are fully agreed.

There is an abnormality about the human language and that is, the tendency to twist even a simple proposition out of shape, misrepresent and misguide an erring person or a simpleton through manipulation, and their skill in dialectics thereby falsifying the truth and spread corruption and differences. This is how many different schools of thought have been established by the theologians, the schools of thought so established conflicting and irreconcilable. Every word is explained by these theologians according to their own whims and fancies, sometimes through erroneous thinking and sometimes deliberately to mislead. Honest differences can be reconciled and agreed but once an erring path has been chosen there is no return to the right track.

Take for example the great commentators of Hindu religion, - Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhavacharya who have founded Theistic, Agnostic and Pantheistic schools of religious thought. In the same manner, the Christian theologians, taking a cue from the imploring Jesus who cried, keeping with the tradition of his times, addressing God as \* 'father' the Christian theologians proclaimed that Jesus is son of god. It is thus, the theologians, sticking to the proof of word entered into unending theological disputations. That is why the Holy Qur'an, while enunciating the 'Mahkumat' took care not to leave any room for doubt or dissent among the believers. The Prophet's exhortations in the context of 'Mutashabihat' verses is noteworthy; "don't quarrel about the Mutashabihat verses." Dissent fades out the original truth when the arguments go off the track and that is exactly abnormalities and corruptions created religious differences. Islam has been saved from such dissent by the 'Mahkumat verses' which are precise and explicit.

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\* "Jesus made use of the figurative language familiar to the theocratic mind" (Schenkel: 'Sketch of the character of Christ'.

"Christ implies to himself the designation of the 'Son of God' in no other sense than that in which the people of Israel or the theocratic King might be so called." (ibid P/177)

**(63) /Verse - 13:**

**TEXT**

"There has already been  
For you a Sign  
In the two armies  
That met (in combat);  
One was fighting in the Cause  
Of God, the other  
Resisting God; these saw  
With their own eyes  
Twice their number  
But God doth support  
With His aid whom He pleaseth  
In this is a warning  
For such as have eyes to see."

**COMMENTARY**

This relates to the Battle of Badr which took place in the second year of the Prophet's flight with a small body of the believers from Mecca to the city of Medina, secretly, unable to bear the persecution.

The defenders in the city of Medinah were only 313 whereas the invading army of the powerful tribe of Qureish comprised of 900 to 1,000 - armed to the teeth and proficient in warfare, infantry and cavalry. On the other hand, the Muslims were poorly armed and were comparatively novices in warfare.

The invaders saw with their own eyes the numbers of the defenders to be a -third of their own numbers. In spite of their pre pondering strength of three to one, the invaders suffered a crushing defeat and the poorly arrayed defending Muslims won a decisive victory. The leader of the invading army was killed along with many chiefs.

In this verse, the Holy Qur'an significantly marks the Battle of Badr as Sign of warning to those who have eyes to see.

**(65) /Verse - 19      The religion of Islam**

**TEXT**

"The religion before God  
Is Islam (submission to His Will):  
Nor did the people of the Book  
Dissent there from except Through  
envy of each other,  
After knowledge had come to them,  
But if any deny the Signs of God, God is  
swift in calling to account."

**COMMENTARY**

The Holy Qur'an has named the religion propounded by it as \* 'Islam'. None of the great religions of the world have a name; the religion of Jesus Christ is called, Christianity that of Gautama Buddha is called Buddhism after the names of their founders.

The name 'Islam' denoted in the Holy Qur'an is not only applicable to the religion propounded by Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.H) but also is equally applicable to all the religions propounded by the prophets in all ages in all countries. Prophet Abraham instructed his sons and likewise, Prophet Jacob, instructed his son:

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\*" European writers have referred to Islam as 'Mohammadanism' but this is not in keeping with the tradition of Mussalmans nor is in conformity with the Holy Qur'an nor mentioned as such in any Muslim literature.. In this context representatives of either religion with regard to the other extends to almost insignificant details, such as for instance the term 'Mohammadan' applied to Mussalmans.



TEXT

"Behold! His Lord said  
To him: "Bow (thy will to me)";  
He said" I bow (my will)  
To the Lord and Cherisher  
Of the universe"

132 "And this was the legacy  
That Abraham left to his sons,  
And so did Jacob;  
O my sons! Allah hath chosen  
The Faith for you; then die not  
Except in the Faith of Islam."

`Islam' means: 'to enter in peace' or 'to keep patience'. The word Islam is derived from the root `salama' meaning 'peace'. One who has attained peace of mind is a Muslim. When one surrenders himself entirely to the Will of God attains real peace. In the Holy Qur'an the verb Aslam' has been used frequently, meaning thereby 'resigning unquestionably to the Will of God'. The unity of mankind the Oneness of God, these are the two doctrines which are the foundations of consolation and Faith. Do not worship anyone other than the ONE God, do not seek the help of anyone other than the One God, do not bow before anyone except before the One God, are concepts which confer individuality, self confidence and excellence and promote spiritual comfort and courage. Peace, as opposed to strife, is possible only when one believes in the unity of mankind and differences of race, tribe, color and country and the jealousies connected therewith will vanish and lead to universal peace.

In this Verse, the word 'DEEN' is used for religion or the foundation of Faith. Yet another word, 'Millar is used as corresponding to `deep' which means; the religion propounded by any prophet according to the conditions of his country and the times. This is the basic conception expounded by the Holy Qur'an and may be termed as a 'natural religion' (agreeable to the human nature) and 'Universal religion'.

Surely, Islam is the religion before God, stresses the Holy Qur'an. What is the distinguishing feature of Islam, one may ask legitimately. There is no other religion which states positively the concept of the unity of God (Oneness) and the Unity of Mankind so explicitly as the Holy Qur'an. All religions, in their ultimate analysis, do agree that God is One but at the same time have made Pantheism - worship of a multitude of gods, permissible thus diversifying godhood; the religion of Christ (Christianity) has diversified godhood into a trinity of Father, Son and the Holy Ghost. Hinduism has divided godhood into several incarnations, thousands of worshipful gods and goddesses and crores of their coteries deified and exalted in their mythology. In other religions too, the notion of One God has degenerated into mythical roles of multiple gods. On top of this, there is no concept at all of unity of mankind. In India, race, clan, color and country constitute the essential discrimination between man and man. Christianity with all the evangelical spirit and the western liberalism could not overcome the color bar and discriminations.

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"This expression is an improper transposition of the term 'Christian' which is perfectly applicable to the adherents of religion based on Christ, whose presence is perpetuated in the Eucharist and in the mystic body, whereas Islam is not based directly on the prophet but on the conception of Allah, and does not consist in a perpetuation of Muhammad but in ritual and legislative conformity of Man and Society to the Supreme Unity."

(Frithjof Schuon in an article entitled `Christianity and Islam' in Triveni, Vol VIII No.1, 1935. (He embraced Islam a few years ago.)



Now look at the religion expounded by the Holy Qur'an; The Christians believe in Christ and do not accept other prophets and do not accept the other revealed books other than Bible. In India, the Rishies born and preached in India only are recognized and only the religious books of Brahmanical religion as authentic and revealed and do not recognize other religions; and for them, only Vedas, and all other compilations - call by any name, are sacred and authentic to the exclusion of the rest. On the other hand, the Holy Qur'an exhorts the believers to believe in all the prophets and the Books revealed to them as God-sent. Herein are quoted the relevant verses:

**`AL - BAQARAH' 11/136:**

**TEXT**

"Say ye! We believe  
In Allah, and the revelation  
Given to us, and to Abraham  
Ismael, Isaac, Jacob,  
And the Tribes and that given  
To Moses and Jesus and that given  
To (all) Prophets from their Lord;  
We make no difference  
Between one and another of them;  
And we bow to Allah (in Islam)."

XXXV/15: "O ye men! It is  
Ye that have need  
Of Allah; but Allah is  
The One Free of all wants,  
Worthy of all praise"

XXXV/24: "Verily we have sent thee  
In truth, as a bearer  
Of glad tidings,  
And as a warner  
And there never was  
A people, without a warner  
Having lived among them  
(In the past)"

X/47: "To every people (was sent),  
An Apostle; when their Apostle  
Comes (before the), the matter  
Will be judged between them  
With justice, and they  
Will not be wronged"

IV/164: "Of some apostles we have  
Already told thee the story;  
Of others we have not, -  
And to Moses Allah spoke direct;

Twenty five prophets have been named in the Holy Qur'an. The Prophet (p.b.u.H) said that 1,24,000 Prophets were sent to different peoples at different times.

The Holy Qur'an teaches that basically, there was one religion but different prophets at different times and in different countries founded a social structure (millat) suited to the particular people. The inherent truth is one and indivisible although the structure of the millat may take different shapes strictly within the framework of the Deen (religion) and the entire mankind is one whole and this is the way the Holy Qur'an has proved that Islam is a natural religion innate in human nature itself.

**Al – I – Imran.III/**

**(66) Verse-III/26, 27, 28, 29 and 30:**

**Battle of the Trench.**

These verses relate to the war of aggression mounted by the Qureish (the unbelievers of Mecca) in confederacy with the Jews and Christians as a final assault to exterminate the Muslims just a year after the Battle of Badar in which they suffered a crushing defeat in spite of their preponderance in numbers. IN self defence the Muslims of Medinah dug a moat around the city. The invading army suffered yet another crushing defeat.

If these verses are read in conjunction with the verses at (mumtahina) LX/8 and 9 there emerges a code of conduct for the Muslims in war and peace. The verses are quoted hereunder:-

**(Al-i-77Imran - III ) /26**

**TEXT:**

"Say: O God !  
Lord of Power (and Rule)  
Thou givest Power  
To whom Thou pleasest,  
And Thou strippest,  
From whom Thou pleasest;  
Thou enduest with honour  
Whom Thou pleasest  
And Thou bringest low  
Whom Thou pleasest;  
In Thy hand is all Good,  
Verily, over all things  
Thou hast power."

" " " III/27 - "Thou causest the Night  
To gain on the Day,  
And Thou causest the Day  
To gain on the Night  
Thou bringest the Living  
Out of the Dead,  
And Thou bringest the dead  
Out of the Living;  
And Thou givest sustenance  
To whom Thou pleasest,  
Without measure."

" " " III/28 - "Let not the Believers  
Take for friends or helpers  
Unbelievers rather than  
Believers; if any do that  
In nothing there will be help  
From God; except by way  
Of precaution, that ye may  
Guard yourselves from them.  
But God cautions you  
(To remember) Himself;  
For the final goal  
Is to God."

III/29 : "Says: "Whether ye hide  
What is in your hearts  
Or reveal it,  
God knows it all;  
He knows what is  
In the heavens,  
And what is on earth  
And God has power  
Over all things."

(Mumtahina)

LX/ 8 : "Allah forbids you not,  
With regard to those who  
Fight you not for (your) Faith  
Nor drive you out  
Of your homes,  
From dealing kindly and justly  
With them; for Allah loveth  
Those who are just."

LX/ 9 : "Allah only forbids you,  
With regard to those who  
Fight you for (your) Faith.  
And drive you out  
Of your homes, and support  
(Others) in driving you out,  
From turning to them  
(For friendship and protection)  
It is such as turn to them  
(In these circumstances),  
That do wrong."

The Holy Qur'an has decreed that those who make friends with the enemies of Faith or abet or even make friends with such enemies are wrong doers and transgressors.

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Even after mounting the Cross Jesus implored, "My Father, why have you abandoned me. Is it possible that God refuses His prophets prayers? This is one solid argument that negates the belief that Jesus died on the Cross as the Christians believe.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Christian belief that Jesus was not created.

(67) There is yet another belief among the Christians; that Jesus was not at all created, that his status is one of transcending all limits of the beginning, the middle and the end and that his birth was that of an incarnation only. Jesus has come to occupy the position of the number two in the concept of the Trinity and this fact is well known. It is a <sup>\*1</sup> firm belief among the Christians that Jesus is the Creator and that he <sup>\*2</sup> intercedes between man and god. The Holy Qur'an says explicitly that Jesus is only a human being and that he was created like all other human beings. But there is a corresponding difference. "God created Adam from earth; He said: "Be" and it was." Why bring in the creation of Adam in this context? The reason simply is to contradict the prevailing belief amongst the Christians that in comparing Adam with Jesus they say <sup>\*3</sup> that Adam was on earthly origin whereas Jesus came down from the heaven.

Some beliefs proclaiming that Jesus is god manifest and not a human being were propagated by St. Paul and that is why it is said that the founder of modern Christianity is St. Paul. It may be stated with authority that the first three Gospels proclaim that Jesus was a prophet:

"And the multitude said, This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee"

(Matthew XXI, II)

"And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, "That a great prophet is risen up; and, That God has visited His people."

(Luke VII, 16)

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<sup>\*1</sup>"And so it is written."The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit."

<sup>\*2</sup>"Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual but that which was natural; and afterward that which is spiritual."

<sup>\*3</sup>"The first man is of the earth, earthly; the second man is the Lord from heaven." (I. Corinthians XV. 45 - 71 ALSO Romans V.14)

**Christ (V/2, P/867) says:**

"Besides the Gnostic is said to have taught that Simon was crucified in the place of Jesus"

Another Biblical scholar, Schleiermacher, in his book: 'Life of Christ' has discussed at length the many of the views expressed by different scholars which are summarized below:-

- 1- Jesus was nailed on the Cross for a few hours only, just about for six hours"
  - \*<sup>1</sup>"The crucified person suffered a lingering and very painful death, sometimes surviving till the third day, an even longer."
  - \*<sup>2</sup>"The crucified often lived for many hours -nay, even for two days. "There are many more such authentic versions which amply prove that Jesus did not die on the Cross. It was possible that he swooned.
- 2- Along with Jesus two other thieves were nailed on the Cross but they did not die and were brought down.
- 3- The hands and feet of the other two thieves were broken but Jesus was spared.
- 4- When a lance was thrust in the side of Jesus blood flowed which proves that Jesus did not die on the Cross.
- 5- Even Pilate could not believe that Jesus died so soon (Matthew 15 - 44)
- 6- \*<sup>3</sup>Unlike the other two Jesus was not buried but was entrusted to a rich disciple of Jesus who placed him in a spacious cave and nursed him with love and care.
- 7- On the third day the stone protecting the entrance to the cave was removed.
- 8- Thereafter, Mary Magdalene who saw him but mistook him for a Gardner (John 20: 15)  
It is evident from this episode that Jesus left the cave unseen by any one and disguised himself as a Gardner to hide his identity. If Jesus had die on the Cross why this disguise. When Mary Magdalene touched his feet the cuts and bruises caused by nailing were \*<sup>4</sup> clear. If he had appeared in his divine body how can it be that the bare feet carry the imprints of fresh bruises caused by nailing and why the disguise of a Gardner? When he appeared before his disciples it is said that he was in the same bodily form.
- 9- Jesus was hungry and had supper with his disciples. (Luke 24; 39 - 43) 10- Jesus travelled
- 10-To Galilee along with two of his disciples.
- 11- Evidently, Jesus must have travelled in disguise.

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\*<sup>1</sup> Dean Farrar, 'Life of Christ, P/449; Neander, 'Life of Jesus Christ' P/472

\*<sup>2</sup> Ibid P/452.

\*<sup>3</sup>"Having obtained the sought-for permission, Joseph provided himself with a winding sheet of fine linen and the necessary bandages, and set out for the place of the skull."

\*<sup>4</sup>Falling on her knees in the wet grass, she laid her loving hands upon those bare feet that still showed the red prints of the nails." (Pappini Giovanni,)

- 12- Before he was caught Jesus prayed all night fervently that he be saved from ignominious death. This particular episode has been described by Dean Farrar, (in his 'Life of Christ' P/394) as under:-

"A grief beyond utterance, a struggle beyond endurance, a horror of great darkness, a giddiness and stupefaction of soul overmastered him; as with the sinking swoon of an anticipated death. It was a tumult of emotion which none must see. 'My Soul, "he said, is full of anguish even unto death, stay here and keep watch, "Reluctantly he tore himself away from their sustaining tenderness and devotion, and retired yet farther, perhaps out of the moonlight into the shadow. And there until slumber overpowered them, they were conscious of how dreadful was that paroxysm of prayer and suffering through which he passed. They saw him sometimes on His knees, sometimes outstretched in prostrate supplication upon the damp ground; they heard snatches of sounds of murmured anguish in which His humanity pleaded with the Divine Will of his Father. The actual words might vary, but the substance was the same throughout. 'Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee; take away this cup from me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what Thou Wilt."

(The Life of Christ, P/394)

**(67) (SECTION - 22)**

**JESUS NOT CRUCIFIED:**

**NISA - IV Verse: 157**

**TEXT**

"That they said (in boast),  
"We killed Christ Jesus  
The son of Mary,  
The Apostle of Allah"  
But they killed him not,  
Nor crucified him  
But so it was made  
To appear to them  
And those who differ  
Therein are full of doubts,  
With no (certain) knowledge,  
But only conjecture to follow,  
For of a surety  
They killed him not, -

**NISA-IV Verse: 158**

"Nay, Allah raised him up  
Unto Himself; and Allah  
Is exalted in power, Wise"

Christians believe that Jesus Christ died on the Cross. The Holy Qur'an proclaims that Jesus Christ died a natural death and not on the Cross as Christians believes. The Verses cited above are clear and explicit on this issue.

## DIFFERENT CHRISTIAN VIEWS SUMMED UP:

Christians believe that Jesus Christ died on the Cross, that on the third day he was buried and three days after his burial he resurrected himself. In this context the view expressed by a Western scholar of Biblical literature, Christlleba \*1 writes:

"On the one hand, the reality of Christ's death was denied and reduced to a mere trance, so that the resurrection would be perfectly natural recovery from a deep swoon. On the other hand; the reality of our Savior's death was confessed, but the resurrection as an outward fact denied and the origin of the belief in it attributed to visions experienced by the disciples."

Yet another Biblical scholar, Strauss, in his book: 'A New Life of

"Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world."

(John, VI, 14)

"The woman sayeth unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet."

(Joh, IV. 19)

"They say unto the blind man again: what sayest thou of him that hath opened thine eyes? He said he is a prophet."

(Joh, IX. 17)

In this manner it has been stated in the Gospels that Jesus was only a prophet. It was not stated anywhere that Jesus was either a god nor the son of god nor that he is a creator. \*2 Jesus referred to himself on numerous occasions that he was only a mortal. In Matthew, Mark, and Luke referred to himself as an ordinary son of man - seventy times on 40 different occasions.

Simply on the saying in the Bible that Jesus is the son of god the Christians have come to believe that Jesus is really the son of god. In those times it was a custom amongst people to refer to god as Abba (Hebrew word for father). Keeping in practice with those times Jesus may have been calling god 'Abba' in the very similar way we refer to a rich man as the son of Lakshmi and surely, we do not mean that he is born in the womb of Lakshmi. It is out of ignorance that the Christians really believe that Jesus is the son of God and worship him as such although it was used by way of a simile according to the usage of his times - 'universal Father' but the Christians have taken this into its literal sense.

The word \*3 Son of God \*4 has been used in different contexts, on different occasions by different persons both in the Old Testament and New Testament. In the Gospels, it is used to mean 'Masih' or 'Prophet'. In the old Testament this word is also used in respect of Angels, kings and prophets.

It has also been affirmed in the Bible THAT Jesus is not the 'Son of God' and this truth is affirmed by the Holy Qur'an emphasizing that Jesus was like any other human being, a mortal and only a prophet of God.

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\*1 "Modern Christian Belief" P/453.

\*2 "In Matthew, Mark and Luke the title (son of man) is found on Jesus' lips about seventy times, representing forty occasions more or less" (Mackintosh P/20)

\*3 "Son of man is only used by Jesus in the Synoptic, virtually always as a self-designation".

\*4 "But in the majority of cases belonging to this class, our wisest course is to regard 'Son of God' as a synonym of Messiah."

Significantly, the issue of 'Sonship of Jesus to God' and many other basic differences between Islam and Christianity were discussed face-to-face with prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.H) himself by a delegation of the well organized Christian community of the city of \* Nazran in 9 A.H. (The Muslim calendar commences from the date of Prophet Muhammad's flight from Mecca to the city of Medinah, corresponding to the Christian era, 15 July, 622 A.D.) which visited Medinah and waited on the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.).

**DISCUSSION; BETWEEN THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD**  
**(p.b.u.H) AND THE DELEGATION OF CHRISTIAN CLERGY.**

**(69)/ Verse - 61:**

The delegation comprised of the notables of the Christian community led by three of their Chiefs, a Bishop and his second priest. The discussions embraced all basic points of Christian belief and very particularly, their belief relating to the 'Son ship of Jesus to God'. In his discourse, the prophet elucidated the Islamic view point as expounded by the Holy Qur'an. In spite of the best persuasion of the Prophet the Christians stubbornly clung to their belief. Whereupon, as a last resort, the prophet suggested that in order to determine as to 'who is right and who is erring and who is lying they better gather together and earnestly pray, 'invoking the curse of God on those who lie. The following verse was revealed to the prophet on this occasion:-

**III/61**

**TEXT**

"If any one disputes  
In this matter with thee,  
Now after (full) knowledge  
Hath come to thee,  
  
Say: "Come! let us  
Gather together, -  
Our sons and your sons,  
Our women and your women,  
Ourselves and yourselves;  
And then let us earnestly pray,  
And invoke the curse  
Of God on those who lie!

**COMMENTARY**

The delegation sought one days respite to enable them to consult mutually. The next day the prophet came out with his family. In the mean time, having consulted among themselves they found that it would be disastrous for them to face the prophet. They said that they are already Muslims. The prophet cutting short, rejected their Members of the delegation pleaded that they are already Muslims but the prophet brushed aside their excuse as flimsy and cannot be accepted since they have backed out and since they have chosen a son for God, they worship the Cross and eat pork.

The prophet invited them to join the fold of Islam but they rejected although they had been fully convinced in the heart of their hearts that Muhammad was truly a prophet. At the same time, they had realized that Islam was now the dominant faith. So they offered to pay tribute and maintain friendly relations. The prophet in turn, gave them a guarantee for the security of the person and property of the inhabitants and allowed them the freedom to choose their own Bishops.

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\* The city of Nazran is in modern Yeman, at the head of 73 villages, entirely inhabited by the Christians. It is said that at that time, it could command 120,000 warriors.



**LETTERS SENT TO ROME, ABYSSINIA, IRAN, EGYPT, SYRIA, EMPERORS  
OF BYZANTIUM AND CHINA INVITING THEM TO ACCEPT ISLAM.**

In 6 A.H. Prophet Muhammad sent letters to the Rulers of many countries inviting them to accept Islam. The Emperor Heraclius was a Christian and to him, therefore, three principles of Islam as enunciated by the Holy Qur'an were cited:-

**TEXT**

111/64

"Say: O people  
Of the Book ! Come  
To common terms  
As between us and you;  
That we worship  
None but God;  
That we associate  
No partners with Him;  
That we erect not,  
From among ourselves,  
Lords and patrons  
Other than God"  
If then they turn back,  
Say ye: "Bear witness  
That we (at least)  
Are Muslims (bowing)  
To God's Will"

The three basic principles enunciated in the above verse are 1) To worship only One God, 2) Associate no partners with God' 3) None other to be worshiped with equal reverence.

The Christians say that they are worshipping One God but at the same time they are worshipping Jesus as the 'Son of God' treating him on a basis of equality with God. They have split the Sublime spirit as of the 'Trinity' - the 'Holy Ghost' and yet claim to believe in One God which is a blasphemy and will not bring them any good. The Holy Qur'an is preaching that Jesus, the son of Mary, is a prophet and should not be worshiped. In this respect, the Holy Qur'an is calling humanity towards and Evident Truth the very basis of which is monotheism; - belief in One God is its basic doctrine. All religions do agree that God is One but they are all acting in contravention with this basic concept in its entirety. That is why the Holy Qur'an is explaining the doctrine of the Oneness of God in different contexts and inviting mankind to worship One God. In this context, a Christian scholar, \* Frithjof Schuon observed:

"Christians cannot lay claim to the idea of Unity with the same right as the Muslims; the idea of redemption is not necessarily linked to the conception of Divine Unity; it might in fact be the outcome of polytheistic doctrine. As for Divine Unity, although theoretically admitted by Christians, it never appears as a dynamic element."

Sir William Jones, following Locke, regards the main point in the Mohammadanism from Christianity to consist:

"In denying vehemently the Character of our Savior as the son, and his equality as God with the Father"

This opinion has been largely entertained in Italy.

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\* "Christianity and Islam" By Frithjof Schuon, in 'Triveni' Vol. VIII No. 1935.

## ISLAM AND MUSLIM AS A BASIS OF UNIVERSAL IDEAL:

(71)-III/Verse-67:

### TEXT

"Abraham was not a Jew,  
Nor yet a Christian;  
But he was true in Faith,  
And bowed his will to God's,  
(Which is Islam)  
And he joined not gods with God."

### COMMENTARY

This is yet another verse which expounds a universal ideal laying down the foundations of a universal religion. In this verse an explicit reference is made to the Prophet Abraham emphasizing that he was not a Jew, nor yet a Christian, but he was righteous in conduct, - one who surrendered himself to the Will of God; he was not an idolator worshiping a multitude of gods.

The first and the foremost condition that has been indicated in this verse is to be righteous in conduct, desist from associating partners with God and bow to the Will of God - surrendering completely to the Will of God.

### MUSLIM:

Significantly, the words used in this verse are: 'Hanifam Musliman' which means: to be righteous in conduct and believe in One God'. To name a religion after one prophet or race or country is repugnant to the spirit and teachings of Islam and the Holy Qur'an does not agree with the prevailing notion that the thousands of prophets ordained to different peoples in different countries and at different times preached different religions because the revealed truth by the messengers of God must necessarily be One established by the Will of God and that the basic foundation of the truth is righteous conduct and bowing to the Will of One God; and this is the essence of the teachings of the prophet of Islam and this is the religion of the Holy Qur'an. In this context Verse: II / 131, 132 and P/N on P/86 is also relevant.

### **ANTIPATHY OF JEWS AND CHRISTIANS TOWARDS OTHER RELIGIONS:**

(72)/ Jews and Christians believe that those who are outside their fold, however pious and righteous in their conduct, cannot attain salvation and the comforts of heaven. Regarding this doctrine of the Jews and the Christians L.T. Hobhouse in his book: 'Morals in Evolution' writes thus:-

"Without faith (in Christ) no virtue can save, and though they had no means of knowing the Gospel the best of the heathen are irrevocably lost. This may be said to have been common ground to the churches down to the modern period. But further than this, faith not merely in Christ, but in the Church's own scheme of salvation is too often a necessity, and no virtue, no sanctity, not even the utmost plenitude of the time spirit of religion, could avail to make good this flaw."

To support the above view Hobhouse has quoted the following \* excerpt:

"For any man who does not hold the unity of the Catholic Church neither Baptism nor alms however profuse, nor death met in the name of Christ, can be of benefit for his salvation."

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\* Quoted from Fulgentius in the Deer. Greg. Corpus Juris P/778 stated to have been pronounced by St. Augustine.

".....Augustine suggests that good works may mitigate damnation when they cannot procure salvation."

Prominent leaders of Protestants like Luther, Calvin and other express similar views. Discussing their views, L.T. Hobhouse writes:

"Calvin even detracts from the merits of the heathens: - The good works of the heathen are distinguished from bad and rewarded in this life, but Augustine is right in saying "That all those who are strangers to the religion of the one True God, however, they may be esteemed worthy of admiration for their reputed virtue, not only merit no reward, but are rather deserving of punishment because they contaminate the pure gifts of God with the pollution of their own hearts." They are restrained from evil not by a sincere attachment to virtue, but by ambition, self- love, or some other irregular disposition. The end of what is right is always to serve God, and as they regard not this end, any externally good act performed by them becomes sin. "Luther, though of more tolerant disposition, is equally clear that outside Christendom, there is no forgiveness and can be no holiness." (Primary Works, ed. Wace and Buchheim, P/104).

..... "The Anglican Article XIII, denies that "Works done before the grace of Christ " are pleasant to God - " He, rather, for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have nature of sin."

(Corpus Juris, P/14)

### **THE VIEW OF THE HOLY QUR'AN:**

In contrast to the total exclusiveness of Jews and Christians, Sabians and others Islam shows all -embracing tolerance towards those whose conduct is righteous and their thoughts and deeds are good. The Holy Qur'an assures that their good deeds will be rewarded and Allah is Just and merciful. The Holy Quran is very clear on this issue: Says:-

(Maida)/V / 69

#### **TEXT**

"Those who believe (in the Qur'an),  
Those who follow the Jewish  
(Scriptures)  
And the Sabians and the  
Christians, -  
Any who believe in Allah  
And the Last Day,  
And work righteousness, -  
On them shall be nor fear,  
Nor Shall they grieve."

## DIFFERENTIATION AND DISCRIMINATION: USURY AND PLEDGES:

(73)/

Jewish and Christian churches as well as the dharma sastras of Hindus permit differentiation and discriminatory treatment, for instance, in case of charging interest.

Let us see the sacred books of the Jews. They do prohibit interest but:

"Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury." but unto your brother thou shalt not lend upon usury."

(Deut, 23: 707)

Similarly, Dharma sutras of Hindus sanctions lower rate of usury be charged from the Brahmins compared to the rate charged to the non-Brahmins. Whatever is permissible for the Brahmins is prohibited to Sudras (the lowest in four-caste structure) Such practice is considered blasphemous by the Holy Qur'an, an very particularly in case of pledges where a believer. Verses 111/73, 76 and 77 are relevant wherein the believers are exhorted to honour their plighted word.

## DISTORTION AND PERVERSION OF THE SCRIPTURES:

(74)/ 78

Verse: III/ 78

### TEXT

"There is among them  
A section who distort  
The Book with their tongues  
(As they read) you would think  
It is a part of the Book.  
But it is no part  
Of the Book; and they say  
"That is from God."  
But it is not from God:  
It is they who tell  
A lie against God  
And (well) they know it!

### COMMENTARY

That part of the Bible which is known as the 'Old Test Testament' is the Scripture of the Jews and that part which is known as the 'New Testament' is the Christian Scripture and there it is their clergy who distorted these scriptures says the Holy Qur'an. This grave charge made by the Holy Qur'an has been proved to be right by the Biblical scholars. In this context Benjamin Baker writes:-

"Merccion's "Gospel" consisted of our Luke, expurgated according to his own ideas. His 'Apostle' contained the Epistles of Paul minus the Pastoral Epistles and a series of passages canceled out from the rest as Jewish interpolations. This was the first Christian Bible distinct from the "Scriptures" of the Synagogue." (P/23).

"Clement attaches to his own epistle, written in behalf of the Church at Rome, the same superhuman authority claimed in ACTs XV-28 for the letter sent by the Church at Jerusalem." (P/20)

"His message, Ignatius declares with emphasis, was revealed to him, together with the occasion for it, directly from heaven. It was 'the voice of God and not only of a man' when he cried out among the Philadelphians.

"Hermas, a 'prophet' of the same Roman Church, as Clement, though a generation later, is still so conscious of the superhuman character of his 'visions', 'Parables' and 'Mandates' that he gives them out for circulation as inspired messages of the spirit; and this for not Rome alone."

"None of the early canons (i.e. list of writings permitted to be read in churches) coincides exactly, it is true, with the New Testament current among ourselves." (P/30)

"The lists of Origen (A.D. 251) and Eusabius (A.D.325) vary in respects both exclusion and inclusion. All early authorities express a doubtful judgement regarding the outer fringes such as James, Jude, 2nd Peter and 3rd John. Even those of larger content, such as Hebrew and Revelations, remained subject of dispute. ... (A party under the lead of Gaius denied the authenticity of all the writings attributed to John, include the Gospel itself.)" (P/31)

"The Gospel of Mark is no exception to the rule that Church writings of this type inevitably undergo recasting and supplementation until the advancing process of canonization at last fixes their text with unalterable rigidity."

Many such writings may be cited but the last one clearly proves the contention of the Holy Qur'an. Now, at last, the Christian scholars are in agreement that the Gospels and other Epistles are all the writings of the Church, and that they inevitably kept changing from time to time. All the above cited quotations are from the book: "The Making of the New Testament" by Benjamin W. Baker, D.D. Writings of many other Biblical scholars are even more critical.

(75) / 89.

#### **PARDON FOR THOSE WHO REPENT:**

The Christian missionaries incessantly indulge in spreading falsehoods against Islam. In the \* World Missionaries Council held at Jerusalem in 1928 a leading missionary declared that there is no room for repentance and redemption in Islam and that the Holy Qur'an imposes.

#### **GOD IS OFT-FORGING.**

(76) /89. a god who is cruel and Jealous". This is blasphemous and a patent falsehood the missionaries keep on spreading against Islam. The Holy Qur'an is very clear on this issue and proclaims:

#### **TEXT**

III/ 89: "Except for those that repent  
(Even) after that,  
And make amends;  
For verily God  
Is oft forgiving,  
Most Merciful."

\*\*\*\*\*

(77) / **TOLERATION:**

III/ 113, 114 and 114:

**TEXT.**

**COMMENTARY**

- 113- "Not all of them are alike;  
Of the people of the Book  
Are a portion that stand  
(For the right); they rehearse  
The Signs of God all night long,  
And they prostrate themselves  
In adoration."
- 114- "They believe in God  
And the Last Day;  
They enjoin what is right,  
And forbid what is wrong;  
And they hasten (in emulation)  
In all good works;  
They are in the ranks  
Of the righteous."
- 115- "Of the good that they do,  
Nothing will be rejected  
Of them; for God knoweth well  
Those that do wrong"

In the foregoing passages have discussed the extent of religious tolerance held to the unbelievers. The Verses now cited in the margin make it even more explicit the universal ideal expounded by the Holy Qur'an. Such unequivocal tolerance in matters of (belief)/religion as is shown by the Holy Qur'an is unheard of in the history of the evolution of religious thought. And in keeping with this enlightened approach the Holy Qur'an proclaims that

"This day have I  
Perfected your religion  
For you, completed  
My favour upon you,  
And chosen for you  
Islam as your religion."

`Maida' (V / 3)

Indeed, it is Islam that has set the final stage for a broader universal vision towards elimination of dissent through cultivation of a spirit of tolerance.

**(78) VERSES – 118 to 120:**

**THE NON-BELIEVERS AND THE HYPOCRITES:**

The early Muslims had to deal with two sets of non-believers who were equally bent upon the destruction of Muslims and their faith. In the above verses Muslims have been instructed as to what kind of relations they should keep with them. The unbelievers were of two categories: (1) those persisting in unbelief but move about with the (Muslims) without showing any particular signs of enmity and moving about in friendship and (2) those who are full of enmity and are determined to destroy the Muslims and their faith.

The Holy Qur'an is advising the Muslims to keep moving on friendly terms with the first category - the hypocrites, but not to take into intimacy the other category, - the unbelievers nor cultivate friendship with them because:

- (1) The non-believers will not relent from any effort to ruin the Muslims and wean them away from their faith.
- (2) They desire the total destruction of the Muslims.
- (3) Openly and in private, they do not like you.
- (4) However sincere you may be in your regard and friendship they will not love you.
- (5) Your prosperity and well-being are an anathema to them. How then are the believers to confront them? The Holy Qur'an advises patience in their dealings and to keep on the path of righteousness and if you (the Muslims) remain steadfast their intrigues shall not avail against you (Muslims). To confront the enemy with righteousness is the best response to the unbeliever's unrelenting hostility.

Evil is not to be replied with evil. Your fair dealing is the best reply to their wicked mentality.

### **SECTION - 13:**

- (79) In the Verses under Section - 13 and in the following verses there are references to the wars fought by the Prophet in self-defense in unavoidable situations arising after his flight from the city of Mecca to the city of Madinah. During the last year (12 years) preceding his flight the Prophet and his dedicated band of believers were persecuted, terrorized and humiliated in so many ways that they give up their faith. The poor and the down trodden amongst the believers such as those who were under their power, - \* slaves, were the first to bear the brunt of the animosity of the Qureish and obviously, they could not lay their heavy hands on those of the higher ranks. The Prophet was unable to protect them and advised them to immigrate to Abyssinia since life had become unbearable in Mecca. In course of three years of preaching fifty had embraced the new faith, and out of these, the first batch of sixteen was advised by the Prophet to emigrate to Abyssinai. The emigrants escaping religious persecution were well received by the 'Najashi' the king of Abyssinia who was a Christian, just and tolerant. He treated the emigrants with respect and gave them asylum. As reports of the kindness of the emperor trickled in more and more Muslims tracked their way to Abyssinia. The local population too began lending sympathetic ear and embraced Islam and soon, the Muslims became an influential body. This enraged the Qureish of Mecca. And disturbed very much, they soon sent a deputation to Abyssinia with presents for claiming back the emigrants but their request was turned down by the king. Enraged by the failure of the deputation the Meccans now redoubled their persecution of the Muslims.

It was the seventh year of the Prophet's mission. In spite of all tortures and sufferings Muslims remained steadfast and the Prophet was gaining more and more converts from the elite and influential as well which was alarming the idolaters. Many times in the past too they had approached the Prophet's uncle, Abu Talib to restrain his nephew from preaching against their gods and this time, they delivered an ultimatum. But the old patriarch was resolved not to let the Qureish harm his nephew. He sent for him to inform him of the latest turn of events and begged him to renounce. Firmly he replied that he will not desist until God made his Cause manifest. Abu Talib assured his nephew that he will never surrender him and encouraged him to continue his preaching. He appealed to Bani- Hashim and Bani Mutallib, his kinsmen, to protect Muhammad from falling a victim to the hatred of rival clans. He got a noble response. At this time, a good many violent opponents of the Prophet had embraced Islam, and prominent among them was Umar, a distinguished member of the powerful family of Ka'ab and became the champion of the new faith.

The incorrigible Qureish now determined to exterminate the entire clan of Bani Hashim and Abd al-Muttalib, and towards this end, made common cause with the other idolater tribes and drew up a solemn pact to excommunicate the Muslims and forced them to live in a desolate place cut off from the rest of the habitation. This was in the seventh year of the Prophet's mission. The Muslims bore the suffering for three years and the Prophet would come out during the days of pilgrimage and preach the new faith. His uncle Abu Talib who stood like a pillar of strength between him and the idolaters died and also, his loving wife Khadija. This was a personal calamity. Some elders friendly to Bani Hashim interceded and the pact of excommunication was annulled. The Prophet started sounding other tribes with whom he may take refuge.

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\* Hazrat Abu Bakar, a dedicated disciple of the Prophet, obtained the liberty of the Abyssinian slave, (Hazrat) Bilal who was undergoing terrible torture at the hands of his master. And likewise, he liberated six other slaves. Abu Lahab, one of the chiefs of Qureish barbarously speared a believing woman, Summayyi.



It so happened that a group of six pilgrims from the city of Yathrib (which came to be known as Madina after the arrival of the Prophet) were conversing in a corner and the Prophet asked them to listen to him; they sat down and listened with earnestness. Impressed by the truth of his words, being traders and knowledgeable, they embraced Islam. When they returned home, they spread the word that a Prophet has arisen in the city of Mecca - a great Prophet the Jews and the Christians were expecting, inviting them to the worship of One God and to give up idolatry. The next year these first six brought six more as deputies from the two principal tribes, who offered a pledge and embraced Islam. The following year (622 A.C. tenth year of the Prophet's mission) their number grew to seventy five men and women, came in company with their idolatrous fellow citizens, and invited the Prophet to their city solemnly pledging to defend him and the new faith as well as the believers. In the meantime, many Muslims had migrated to the city of Yathrib where they were received with open hands and open hearts. The only clarification they sought was about his permanent residence. The Prophet announced that he will never return to Mecca in his days of prosperity and smilingly assured them. "Nay, never; your blood is my blood; I am yours, you are mine." This was the second pledge. It was the 13th year of his mission.

The Prophet remained in Mecca throughout the month and advised all Muslims to migrate to Yathrib. A Meccan spy watching the meeting from a hiding place reported the incident to Qureish. They were furious. The Prophet directed all the Muslims to move out of Mecca for a safe refuge in the city of Yathrib; this is called Hijrat.

Prophet Muhammad himself was born in the nobility, - the most powerful tribe of Qureish, in the family of Bani Hashim, the custodians of the Ka'aba, the central place of pilgrimage of all the Arabs and his lineage alone entitled him to a place of honour and dignity. Personally, he has widely respected and honoured for his truthfulness, honesty and upright character, adored as 'Amin' the trustworthy and the people kept their valuables with him. Born an orphan, he was brought up by his grandfather, Abdul-Muttalib, the patriarch of Ka'aba who on his death in 579 A.D. confided the infant to the care of his son Abu Talib, who succeeded his father to the Patriarchate of the Holy Ka'aba. So long as Abu Talib was alive no harm could be contemplated by anyone but after his death uncle Abu Talib had been a pillar of strength to him against the pagans and the death of his beloved wife, Khadija, the first to believe in his mission, Mecca no longer held any charm for him and he started sounding for an alternate place of refuge. The persecution grew in severity and the Qureish who were in the forefront grew bold enough to conspire against his life. The pledge given by the people of Yathrib drove them almost mad and they decided to murder the Prophet.

#### **MIGRATION TO YATHRIB:**

Warned in time by the Angel (Jibrail) the Prophet took into confidence his most dedicated disciple and companion, (Hazrat) Abu Bakr, asked Ali to sleep in his bed and slipped out, safely and unseen, in the darkness of night in spite of the night long vigil of the conspirators besieging his house. After three days spent in hiding in the cavern of Mount Thaur in the vicinity of Mecca and thereafter three days journey on camel, the Prophet along with his companion Abu Bakr arrived safely in Yathrib. The people who were waiting for him on the outskirts of the city, attired in their best accorded a rousing welcome to the Prophet. It was Monday, 12 Rabiul Awal, corresponding to 31st May, 622 A.C. From that day onwards the Muslim calendar of Hejira commences.



## **\*<sup>1</sup> FOUNDING OF THE FIRST ISLAMIC STATE:**

The two tribes of **\*<sup>2</sup>** 'Aws and Khazraj', forgetting their bitter antagonism and mortal blood feuds in the brotherhood of Islam rallied round the banner of the Prophet forming the fulcrum of the Muslim Commonwealth. The old divisions disappeared and the honourable designation of 'Ansars' (Helpers) and 'Muhajireen' (Exiles) became the common title. Yathrib changed its ancient name and came to be known as 'Madinatu'n-nabi', - the City of the Prophet or 'Al-Madinah'.

Under the new circumstances the Prophet found himself in a new role and set about in right earnest to organize the Muslims. The first and the foremost task was the rehabilitation of the Muslims who had migrated from Mecca. This task was accomplished by his suggestion that the Muslim families of Madinah should accept their brothers-in-faith from Mecca which was accepted with open heart and overflowing enthusiasm by the Muslims of Madinah.

### **STATE OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS IN YATHRIB:**

Unlike Mecca which was a city state, ruled by an oligarchy of ten tribes with a well knit administration and co-ordinating authority to function in peace and war Yathrib had no such administrative apparatus -super and infra structure, inhabited by Muslim and Non-Muslim tribes, as well as the powerful tribes of Jews, prosperous and powerful. The most important were (1) Bani-Nazir of Khybar, (2) the Bani-Khuraizha at Fidak and (3) the Bani-Kainuka near Madinah itself, living in fortified cantons. The two powerful Arab tribes (1) Aws and (2) Khazraj were domineering but of late, had considerably been weakened due to a bitter war and were actually living in a state of war at the time of the arrival of the Prophet.

### **CITY STATE OF MADINAH FOUNDED:**

**\*<sup>3</sup>**"On his arrival the Prophet was staying in the territory of Khazraj, who was by the way, related to the Prophet through his grandmother. To demonstrate and establish neutrality between the two antagonists tribes the Prophet moved from Quba to a place where the tribe of Bani Najjar had settled. Soon, he summoned there a conference of the representatives of various elements comprising the population of Madinah, and presented his proposal for setting up a state. The majority accepted it A state was thus set up which consisted of only a part of the city."

.... "Soon, a constitution was drawn. It was a unique achievement. For the first time in history the rights and obligations of subjects and the sovereign were reduced to writing. The constitution of the state was drafted with the consent of all the parties concerned. Thus came members of both the tribes who had embraced Islam before the arrival of the Prophet. Yet, members of one tribe would not say their prayers behind a Imam (Leader) belonging to the other tribe, so much so, a Imam had to be sent from Mecca by the Prophet. The first thing that the Prophet did was to bring about an abiding reconciliation and friendship between the two tribes in the first instance and all other tribes in course of time.

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**\*<sup>1</sup>** There was a bloody war between these two powerful tribes just five years before the arrival of the Prophet and a state-of-war still existed between them.

**\*<sup>2</sup>** This paragraph included to maintain continuity pages 107-113.

**\*<sup>3</sup>** Quoted from: 'The Emergence of Islam' By Muhammad Hamidullah, lately Head of the Department of International Relations, Osmania University, Hyderabad - (A.P.) now in France.

\* "Came into existence the historic document of the first written constitution of a state piloted by a man who was not able to write himself.". One of the Clauses stated:" for Muslims their religion and for Jews their religion". All the elements constituting the body-politic were assured of religious, judicial and legal freedom. The Prophet (p.b.u.H) was recognized - to use a modern appellation - as the President of the State. Had a member of the Aws had been elected to this office the Khazraj might not have accepted him. The warring tribes agreed on a man in whom they had confidence for they had seen for themselves during the short time he was there that he was neutral, just, tolerant and generous."

"Having founded and secured a city-state from within, the Prophet proceeded to seek alliances with the tribes in the neighborhood. He went first to the north at a distance of three or four days journey from Madinah, and succeeded in making a military alliance with the non- Muslim tribes. The treaty clearly stipulated that it had nothing to do with religious affairs and that it was exclusively a military arrangement. It was agreed that the contracting parties would help each other in the event of an attack by the third party. After this initial success in the north the Prophet proceeded to the South where non- Muslim tribes agreed to sign a similar military pact with him. He then made for the east and sought alliances with the tribes.....The basic idea was to secure Madinah through seeking the friendship of tribes living around it so that no enemy could launch a direct attack on the city - state. The enemy - the inveterate and the incorrigible Qureish would have to contend with the allies of Madinah in the first instance and they could be depended upon to warn the city of an impending attack. The friendly settlements around it helped advance the cause of the city's defence."

#### **WARS FOR SURVIVAL AND DEFENCE OF THE CITY STATE OF MADINAH:**

Bitterly enraged at the way the Prophet frustrated their conspiracy to murder him and destroy the Muslims the Meccans, at first sent threatening messages to the people of Madinah to deport the fugitives and soon started raiding the places in the vicinity of Madinah driving away with them herds of camels and flocks of sheep and destroying the fruit trees of the Muslims. These were grave provocations indeed and the Prophet was left with no other alternative than to girdle up his sword and take prompt pre-emptive steps against the marauding zeal and aggressive intentions of the Qureish and consolidate his power in Madinah as a bulwark against the pagans and antagonists. The Prophet received advance warning of the movements and war like preparations of the Meccans. Abu Lahb was already on the move to invade Madinah with a thousand warriors, well equipped with arms, with a hundred horses and 700 camels towards the valley of (Badr' purporting to protect a large caravan returning from Syria which was expected to traverse through the valley of 'Badr'. The caravan was carrying arms besides merchandise whose sale proceeds were specifically intended to finance the Meccan adventures against the Muslims and the city of Madinah.

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\* Quoted from: 'The Emergence of Islam' By Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah.

In the meantime, Abu Sufyan, who was leading the caravan, personally reconnoitered 'Badr' and growing apprehensive of being waylaid by the expeditionary force of Madinahites diverted the route bypassing Badr and headed along the sea shore towards Mecca. From Badr he sent a messenger to Abu Lahb informing him that the caravan has bypassed 'Badr' and safely proceeding along the sea shore out of reach of the Madinahites and advised him to turn back to Mecca since there was no need for a war with the Muslims. But this advice fell on deaf ears and Abu Lahb advanced towards 'Badr' on his campaign to crush the Muslims and destroy Madinah. Thus war was forced on the Muslims and it became incumbent upon the Prophet to defend the city that gave him and the Muslims a safe refuge and now their own survival was bound up with the security of Madinah. Madinah had now come under direct threat of invasion by the Meccans as a result of the obduracy of Abu Lahb from returning to Mecca peacefully and his firm determination to invade Madinah and destroy it. This was a development which was not anticipated by the Prophet.

The main objective of the expeditionary force personally led by the Prophet himself to the valley of 'Badr' was to intercept the Meccan caravan only as a punishment for their marauding raids against the Muslims of Madinah and for their aggressive violation of the ban imposed on their using the trade and caravan routes passing through the territory of Muslims and their allies. This ban was imposed to deprive the Meccans of the enormous benefit of trade with Syria, Iraq and Egypt upon which their prosperity entirely depended. This ban was imposed to bring down the arrogant Qureish to their senses without recourse to war and to keep them under check against their aggressive adventures against the Muslims and the city state of Madinah. It may not be out of place to mention that the valley takes its name from a well named 'Badr' round which a township had developed and lies on the caravan route to Mecca. The people were allied to the new city state of Madinah but were not aware of the impending moves for a clash between the Meccans and the Prophet.

### **THE BATTLE OF BADR (2 A.H 17 Ramzan)**

War had now become inevitable but the small force consisting of only 313 men, some of whom were youngsters, inadequately armed, who had only two horses as against the enemy who had a hundred, had only a dozen pieces of armor as against the enemy with two hundred pieces, was not at all geared up for war against the invading army of thousand warriors armed to the teeth. The Ansars of Madinah were under no obligation to come out in war against the Quraysh unless Madinah came under direct attack. It was under such overwhelming odds that the Prophet was forced to give battle. The Prophet had received timely intelligence of the escape of the caravan and the approaching enemy. He occupied the valley and took up position on the hill - top to survey the position of war. He prostrated and invoked God's help against the overwhelming host of heathens.

The Quraysh came in the open; the battle began and the result was a decisive victory of the Muslims. The Muslims fought with unprecedented valour inflicting 70 casualties in the enemy rank and captured many prisoners. The Muslims suffered only two dead - martyrs in the noble cause of the faith. Among the enemy dead was the leader of the Quraysh, Abdul Hakam the incorrigible enemy of Islam and named Abu Jahl - father of ignorance. Only eight Muslims attained martyrdom. Many prominent leaders Abu Jahl, the incorrigible persecutor of Muhammad (S.A.W) the other most obnoxious persecutor of Muhammad (S.A.W), - Abu Lahab who succeeded Abu Talib had stayed behind but was humiliated and severely wounded by his own men who had returned with news from the battle field; the wound was so grievous that it developed into pastures and he died; his body lay rotting and unburied for two days by his sons.

Of the seventy prisoners taken only two were executed for their enormous crimes against the Muslims aggressive adventures and the rest were treated with utmost generosity as against the common usage and ethics of Arab warfare and what more, the prisoners were billeted with the victor's families and confided to their care until they were ransomed off or freed.

The victory in the battle of Badr was a milestone in the history of Islam after its emergence in to statehood; it gave a tremendous boost to the morale of the Muslims, it strengthened the power base of Muslim state of Madinah and enhanced the image of Islam among the pagan Arab who had not yet entered the new faith.

### **BATTLE OF OHOD (3.A.H.)**

After the crushing defeat suffered at the Badr every house in Mecca went into mourning and they were all burning with revenge. Soon after the return of all the prisoners from Madinah Abu Sufyan organized a small band of warriors and swooped down scouring the countryside of Madinah in its near vicinity destroying fruit trees and slaying people and when the Muslims sallied forth to face them he fled. He conspired with the Jews and the other tribes and with the hypocrites within the city itself, struck an alliance with two powerful tribes, organized a formidable army of 3,000 of whom 700 were clad in armour, and marched towards Madinah to invade the city. He occupied the hill of Ohad, near the city.

The Muslims took up the challenge but could organize just one thousand men which was reduced by 300 men due to the desertion by the hypocrites and due to the enmity of the Jews. However, they fought bravely and dislodged the Meccan army from the hill top and occupied the slopes and the open ground below, with the hill on their back. This was an advantage gained and the Prophet stationed (50) archers on the hill-top with strict instruction not to leave their post under any circumstances.

The battle raged and soon, the Muslims routed the invaders who took to flight. The battle was won. Unfortunately, the archers on the hill top, much against the strict instructions of the Prophet, seeing that the enemy has taken to flight and the battle was won, hurried down their entrenched post. The Meccan commander, Khalid Bin Wand, perceiving their folly attacked from the rear with lightning speed turning the Muslim victory into a virtual defeat as the fleeing cavalry under Abu Sufyan suddenly rallied round in a frontal attack. The Muslims were caught between and were desperately fighting for life. A Rumor started that the Prophet was killed and both Omar and Abu Bakr, both wounded, were in despair. The idolaters' concentrated on their attack on the Prophet. Ali and his band of warriors succeeded in retreating to a safe point on hill slope and seeing the Muslims fighting desperately down below round the Prophet, hurried to their rescue. The Meccans turned their back as Abu Sufyan was convinced that the Prophet was killed. The Meccans were too tired and exhausted to pursue their advantage and headed towards Mecca declaring that they will come again. But, before they left, they collected their dead to bury them and mutilated the bodies of the Muslim-dead. Abu Sufyan's wife Hinda, chewed the heart of Hamzah, the uncle of the Prophet who fell in the battle and made bracelets and necklaces of the noses and ears of the Muslim-dead bodies.

The Prophet was very much grieved by this barbarous incident and vowed reprisals. It was in this context that a verse was revealed by Allah:

XVI/126 (AL NAHL)

"If ye punish, then punish with the  
like of that wherewith ye were  
afflicted. But if ye endure  
patiently, verily it is better for  
the patient."

(Pickthall)

The prophet was relieved of his vow by the above revelation.

Soon after he returned to Madinah the following day, the Prophet directed a small body of his disciples to pursue the returning enemy to impress on the Meccans that he was still strong enough to teach them a lesson. Abu Sufyan learning of the pursuit hastened back to Mecca.

### **BATTLE OF THE TRENCH (5 A.H.)**

The Meccans were tirelessly conspiring against the Muslims and towards this and they conspired with the Jews who were very active against the Muslims. A formidable army of 12,000 was organized this time in their final bid to destroy the Muslims. Led by Abu Sufyan, the Meccan army marched on Madinah, and encamped within a few miles of Madinah on its most vulnerable side towards Ohd, and laid siege.

To face this formidable army Muslims could muster three thousand men only and remained on the defensive, behind a trench they had dug after day and night toil. Apart from the enemy there was danger from the treachery of Jews and, above all from the group of hypocrites within the city. Two tribes of Jews on the outskirts of Madinah went over to the side of the enemy.

The strategy of the enemy was to draw the Muslims in the open but they were firmly entrenched behind the trench. The siege lasted for twenty days. The night was pitch dark and a violent storm of wind and rain put out the fires in the enemy camp, their tents were blown out and Abu Sufyan and his formidable army fled and the rest took refuge with the Jewish tribe 'Bani Khuraizaha'. When the storm subsided they saw that the enemy had disappeared. The event had been foretold by the Prophet the previous night and it came true. This was the last offensive by the Quraysh.

The treachery of the Jewish tribes as noted and especially, the treachery of Bani- Khuraizaha and their proximity constituted a continuing danger. They had proved themselves traitor's in spite of oath of allegiance. They were asked to explain but they bogged and therefore, they were besieged and compelled to surrender. They pleaded that tribe, their ally, may be allowed to judge which was accepted but the judgement went against them and they were condemned to death - the fighting men to be killed and their women and children taken into slavery.

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It has become necessary to make mention of the three wars waged by the Prophet in self defence to dispel and refute the false accusation of the Christian missionaries that Islam was established by force of sword. The Christian missionaries are never tired of reminding that while Jesus taught his disciples to turn the other cheek when confronting aggression the Prophet of Islam girdled the sword to repel aggression. The religion of Islam teaches that Jesus was a Prophet and that there is no discrimination between Prophets in the matter of reverence. We are not criticizing Jesus; we are only criticizing the falsehoods being propagated by the Christian Church.

Islam is a complete religion says the Holy Qur'an. Islam is not a vision of an idealist; it embraces and governs every aspect of human life from the cradle to the grave, suits every age and every stage of the evolution and development of human civilization and culture and accords with the laws of nature. It constitutes a dynamic force in human life conducive to the growth of an ideal society. The problems confronting us are mainly due to our own inability to implement the ideal in our life models and styles. Complete non-violence as a creed may be a great ideal but is it possible to practice it. \* Jesus, in his times, and Tolstoy and Gandhiji preached non- violence but has not

Gandhiji confessed that he is the only satyagrahi? At best, we can adopt it as an expedient but not as a rule of life. What Islam teaches us is that we are free to return the blow, - eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth, but not more; it is only just and permissible but transgression is strictly prohibited. However, to forget and forgive, is nobler and divine. Right on the battlefield when the enemy was closing on him menacingly the Prophet prayed; "O Lord forgive them; they are ignorant, they know not what they are doing." This was the conduct of the Prophet in his personal life; that was the ideal; the Prophet bore no animosity, always polite and patient and full of pity even for his worst enemies and seeking God's Mercy for them. This is the secret of Islamic code of conduct.

\*Writing about Buddhist and Christian morality L.T.Hobson says:

"In Buddhism and Christianity the spiritual order formed for itself a new sphere detached from the more elementary morals of the ordinary good citizens. In this detachment, however, were seeds of trouble. We have already seen that the Buddhist life could hardly be lived in its perfection by the ordinary householder. The spiritual and the human had already fallen apart. In Christianity the fissure is in some respects deeper. "Christianity terms human nature as base and sinful and life is afflicted with sin."

"The great institutions of humanity - marriage, fatherhood, citizenship, are all things of this world. The Christian must make his account with them, but they are not of Christian origin Christ's true kingdom is not of this world..... The detachment of what was best in Christianity from the world's affairs made a Christian body unfit to rule the world's affairs."

On the other hand, Islam is giving a law for an universal order in the field of human relations but,

"Christianity has in fact, no theory of society by which to guide itself. Its doctrine is personal. The common life that it contemplates is a life of brotherly love, a community of saints where all things are in common and lawsuits are no, nor another modes of maintaining order by the strong arm. 'Hence amid all the wonderful descriptions of charity, of life, of self- surrender, we hear very little of justice.'"

"The code of the Sermon on the mount appears to contemplate what in modern phrase we should call a voluntary's or Anarchist community. Non- resistance is its central feature. There is to be no fighting; no revenge, no self-defense, no insistence on private property, no excessive provision for the future. If there is to be any marrying or giving in marriage, there is to be no divorcing of wives 'save for the cause of fornication' Altogether, a life that might be lived for a while by a picked body of perfect men and women'. How are these rules to be made applicable to a world in which men and women are so far from perfect?"

In the matter of applying this doctrine in the event of war, L.T. Hobhouse in his book 'Morals in evolution' Vol. II P/150-159 writes:

"On this side also the maintenance of the pure teaching of the Gospel has been left to small and isolated sects. The doctrine of non-resistance was frankly abandoned by the majority of the Churches... I is accepted in the canons as a part of the Divine Law, but as abrogated by the positive law of the empire .... The pure teaching of the Gospel was left to a few condemned sectaries to preserve, and was put aside by respectability as being merely that which certain Anabaptists do falsely boasted."

Condemning the supernatural Christian morality, he says:

"Supernatural ethics fail in that they do not recognize the ideal element in the performance of natural duty."



## **ISLAMIC ETHICS AND MORALITY IN WARFARE:**

Now let us see what Islam says in this context:

### **TEXT**

(`Hajj')XXII/39: "To those against whom  
War is made, permission  
Is given (to fight) because  
They are wronged; - and verily  
Allah is most Powerful  
For their aid.

" " " 40: "(They are) those  
Who have been expelled from their  
Homes  
In defiance of right –  
(For no cause) except  
That they say, 'Our Lord  
Is Allah. "Did not Allah  
Check one set of people  
By means of another,  
There would surely have been  
Pulled down monasteries, Churches,  
Synagogues, and mosques, in which  
The name of Allah is commemorated  
In abundant measure, Allah will  
Certainly aid those who  
Aid (His) cause; - for verily  
Allah is full of strength  
Exalted in Might  
(Able to enforce His Will)

II/190(`AL - BAQARAH'): "Fight in the Cause of Allah,  
Those who fight you,  
But do not transgress limits;"  
For Allah loveth not transgressors."

"" /192(`AL - BAQARAH'): "For tumult and oppression  
Are worse than slaughter."

('AL - BAQARAH') 11/193: "Fight them on  
Until there is no more  
Tumult or oppression"  
And there prevail  
Justice and faith in Allah;  
But if they cease,  
Let there be no hostility."  
Except to those  
Who practice oppression"

" " " 217: "But graver is it  
In the sight of Allah  
To prevent access  
To the sacred Mosque  
And drive out its member,  
Tumult and oppression  
Are worse than slaughter"

(Nisa') IV/75: "And why should ye not  
 Fight in the cause of Allah And  
 those who, being weak,  
 And are ill treated (and oppressed)  
 Men, women and children,  
 Whose cry is: "Our Lord!  
 Rescue us from this town,  
 Whose people are oppressors,  
 And raise for us from Thee  
 One who will protect;  
 And raise for us from Thee  
 One who will help."

('Tauba') IX/13: "Will ye not fight people  
 Who violated their oaths,  
 Plotted to expel the Apostle  
 And took the aggressive  
 (By being the first (to assault) you  
 Do ye fear them? Nay,  
 It is Allah Whom ye should  
 More justly fear, if ye believe."

As cited in the above verses, the Holy Qur'an permits war in self defence. All other religions permit war in self-defence. Aryan sages have also permitted war in self-defence and war to punish the tyrants and aggressors in order to restore righteousness. Manu says that power in the hands of a tyrant is a danger to peace. And power in the hands of a righteous king is a deterrent to those who oppress and spread evil.

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### **DISCIPLINE AND FAITH:**

#### **(79) / Verse-III/122:**

It so happened that two tribes wavered but in the next moment realized their folly and rallied behind the Prophet's banner. This was due to lack of discipline and complete trust in God. Here is a lesson the Holy Qur'an reminds; the cause of the fall of a people is due to lack of discipline and total faith in God. This verse is referring to the battle of 'Ohd' where a victory in hand was frustrated because the Muslims acted in breach of the rule - discipline and faith, the two cardinal principles that ensure greatness of a people in war and peace.

#### **(80) /Verse-III/128.**

It was in the battle of 'Ohd' that the Prophet suffered the loss of a tooth. The Prophet cried out in disgust, "How can this people attain salvation when they persecute a prophet in this way." A verse was revealed admonishing the Prophet not to curse any one because to-days enemy may be transformed into a friend tomorrow and to-days unbelievers may come believers tomorrow. One should not accuse any one outright in haste. The verses are cited below:-



**111/128:**

**TEXT**

"Not for thee (But for Allah),  
Is the decision;  
Whether He turns in Mercy  
To them, or punish them;  
For they are indeed  
wrong doers."

**Verse: 11/244:**

**TEXT:**

"Then fight in the cause  
Of Allah, and know that Allah  
Heareth and knoweth all things."

**RESTRAIN ANGER AND FORGIVE AND BE CHARITABLE:**

(81)/ VERSE: 111/134:

"The Holy Qur'an is teaching three principles to follow:

1) Give in charity both in prosperity and in adversity, 2) restrain anger and 3) forgive and pardon faults of others. Mark! what great importance Islam attaches to giving in alms and charity. The verses are cited below:-

111/134

**TEXT**

"Those who spend (freely),  
Whether in prosperity  
Or in adversity;  
Who restrain anger,  
And pardon (all) men; -  
For Allah loves those  
Who do good"

**('HADITH' (SAYINGS OF THE PROPHET))**

(Hadith - sayings of the Prophet):

The Prophet has further said to his disciples:

"He is not the strongest who has floored his opponent in a duel; the one who restrains anger is the strongest."  
(Ahmed)

A disciple named Haris requested for a very brief instruction on which he could act. The Prophet said:

"Never be angry". He repeated his request but the same was the answer to every repetition."  
(Masnad-e-Ahmed)

" One of the disciples, Abu Zar, happened to be angry with someone. He was standing; he sat at once and then he slept for some time. A man who was witnessing this asked him the reason for his abnormal behaviour. He (Abu Zar) replied that the Prophet had advised him once that in order to restrain anger he sit or rest until he becomes cool and calm and anger has vanished from his heart."

(Masnad-e-Ahmed)

" Those who are in a position to repel and yet suppress their anger God will bring peace."  
(Abu Dau'd)

And regarding forgiving others who erred or wronged the Prophet advised his disciples thus:-

"Be kind to people and God will be kind to you. Forgive others for the wrongs inflicted on you, God will forgive you."

"Those who forgive others God will raise them in honour."

"He who shows moderation and forgives God will bestow honours."

"Those who forgive who sinned against them will abide in heaven."

All the sayings cited above have been quoted from the Commentary of Ibn-e Kasir.

Once the people turned to his disciples and asked them: "Do you know who is a destitute or distressed one?" They replied, "the one who is poor" The Prophet said, "No" The destitute is one who is rich but does not spend his money on alms and is miserly.

One day when preaching his disciples the Prophet asked them "Are there anyone amongst you who love their heir's inheritance more than their own?" The disciples replied, "None". The Prophet said that what they spend in alms and charity is theirs and whatever they save and hoard is not theirs; it is their heir's. And this means that you love your heir's riches more than your own."

(Bokhari, Muslim)

#### **CAUSE AND EFFECT - HISTORY HAS A MORAL TO TEACH RISE AND FALL OF NATIONS; EVIDENCE IN HISTORY**

(82)/ III/Verse - 137.

##### **TEXT**

137- "Many were the Ways of life  
That have passed away  
Before you; travel through  
The earth, and see what was  
The end of those  
Who rejected truth.

138- "Here is a plain statement  
To men, a guidance  
And instruction to those  
Who fear Allah."

##### **COMMENTARY**

Islam is the first religion to have pointed out to an established truth in the history of mankind that every human action was the result of some preceding action and this is the moral we have to learn from history. It is in this context that stress is placed on the need for traveling widely and learns a moral lesson from the rise and fall of nations. When the Laws of God are transgressed decay necessarily sets in and result in the fall of the nations. The Holy Qur'an is exhorting people to study the rise and fall of nations and civilizations. The Arabs were not content with the progress of the sciences they acquired but learnt much from a study of nature itself.

William Draper, M.D., writing in "History of the Conflict between Religion and Science" observes:

"They (the Arabs) perceived that it (Science) can never advance by mere speculation; its only sure progress is the practical interrogation of the nature."..." To the Christian the progress of the world was an exhibition of disconnected impulses, of sudden surprises. To the Mohammedan that progress presented a very different aspect. Every corporeal action was due to some preceding motion; every thought, every historical event was the offspring of some preceding event; every human action was the result of some forgone and accomplished action. In the long annals of our race nothing has ever been abruptly introduced. There has been an orderly, an inevitable sequence from event to event."

Verses - 137 to 148 are relevant.

**(83)/ Verse - 111/144 - 146.**

In warfare success and failure and, in our lives struggle, fruitfulness and frustrations are entirely dependent on our own actions and the results do not follow our likes and dislikes. Action and reaction are inter-related and the results following may be comfortable or distressing. One may ask how then is it that the Most Merciful God enforce this rule so rigidly without distinction between those who strive (in the way of Allah) and those who resist (faith)? The frustrations we meet, the trials and tribulations we suffer with pain - ultimately serve as lessons in which there is invariably a moral for our own reformation or to learn from others' experiences who suffered in like manner. That will teach us to observe discipline and generate motive force which has been the secret of human progress. A western idealist has aptly observed: Physical evil has been the good which impelled man to most of those achievements which make the history of man so wonderful. Hardship is the stern but fecund parent of invention.

**(84)/ Verse - 144:**

During the Battle of 'Uhud' the enemy set afloat a rumour that the Prophet was slain. The Muslims lost heart and some, wavered and fled. It was in this context that the above verse (144) was revealed say some commentators.

Muslims were fighting to uphold truth and Faith and to destroy unbelief and this truth and faith was more important than the life of the Prophet himself. The Holy Qur'an is exhorting the faithful to strive for the reinstatement of the truth and faith. In other religions the Prophets were accorded much greater reverence and allegiance than to the truth and faith itself, so much so, that they were deified and adorned the temples where they were worshipped as gods. Such has been the case of Sri Krishna, Jesus and Buddha. Without questioning the veracity of the message and its divinity it is a fact that they adore the temples in thousands where they are worshipped as gods. The Holy Qur'an has left no room at all for this peril to overtake the believers by clearly stating thus:

**Verse - 111/144:**

**TEXT**

"Muhammad is no more  
Than an Apostle! Many  
Were the Apostles that passed away  
Before him. If he had died  
Or were slain, will ye then  
Turn back on your heels?  
If any did turn back  
On his heels, not the least  
Harm will he do to Allah;  
But Allah (on the other hand)  
Will swiftly reward those  
Who (Serve Him) with gratitude"

The Holy Qur'an has thus fortified the faith -belief in One God - by strictly not ascribing any sort of divinity to the Prophet.

**SPIRITUAL SECRETS CAN BE DISCLOSED TO ONLY PROPHETS:**

(85) / III/Verse - 179.

**TEXT**

"Allah will not leave  
The believers in the state  
In which ye are now,  
Until He separates  
What is evil  
From what is good.  
Nor will He disclose  
To you the secrets  
Of the Unseen.  
But He chooses  
Of His Apostles  
(For the purpose)  
Whom he pleases.  
So believe in Allah  
And His Apostles;  
And if ye believe  
And do right,  
Ye have a reward  
Without measure"

**COMMENTARY**

Things that are beyond the reach of human comprehension cannot be translated into human language. And, even if they are narrated they can only be narrated in symbolical language (allegorical, - in similes and metaphors) and this has been largely avoided as at times, even these allusions spur human imagination into misleading speculation ending into unbelief. That is why the Holy Qur'an affirms more precisely that the knowledge of things supernatural, (sublime and celestial) is disclosed and imparted only to the Apostles and to whom He chooses. It is not something which can be disclosed to the common folk.

**(86) 180: CHARITY: SKILLS AND LEARNING BESTOWED AS GIFTS - ONE SHOULD NOT BE MISERLY IN GIVING CHARITY AND IMPARTING SKILLS LEARNING.**

Verse - 180

**TEXT**

"And let not those  
Who covetously withhold  
Of the gifts which Allah  
Hath given them of His Grace.  
Think that it is good for them;  
Nay, it will be the worse  
For them; soon shall be the things  
Which they covetously withheld  
Be tied to their necks  
Like a twisted collar,  
On the Day of Judgement.  
To Allah belongs the heritage  
Of the heavens and the earth;  
And Allah is well – acquainted  
With all that ye do."

**COMMENTARY**

The Holy Qur'an is addressing those whom He has graced with "His gifts" but are clinging to these for their exclusive enjoyment and denying them to others. 'Gifts' include wealth, riches, learning and skills, intellect and spiritual insight. God has enjoined charity and not miserliness. Commenting on this verse, Ibne Abbas includes learning, intellect and insight, skills, strength of limb as well, as gifts, besides, the material wealth and such as those who, are unwilling to impart to those who were eager to learn or are the needy, are warned to heed the command of God. In this context some sayings of the Prophet are cited below:

"If anyone who is needy approaches his employer for assistance and the employer declines although he has enough to spare will be punished on the Day of Judgement."

(Tabarri)

"If any poor man approaches his wealthy relative requests for any assistance but is turned out the rich man will be punished - his riches will take the shape of a serpent and curl round his neck."

(Ibne Jarir)

**SORROWS, TRIALS AND TRIBULATION**

(87) III/Verse - 182.

**TEXT**

"This is because  
Of the (unrighteous deeds)  
Which your hands  
Sent on before ye;  
For Allah never harms  
Those who serve Him"

**COMMENTARY**

What is the reason for the sorrows that afflict an individual or a nation? Is God responsible for this inequity? Or is it a punishment for the sins committed by the race or the nation to which he belongs? This is in answer to the questions put forward above.

(In this context verse at 11/90 refers) Allah being the Most Merciful it is unthinkable that He will persecute those who serve Him. Whatever grief afflicts us is the result of the misdeeds committed by us or our race. Pain and pleasure are of our own making. This issue will be discussed in greater detail in the last two Chapters.



In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

### **Nisa ( Women)**

#### **PREFACE**

In this Chapter there are precepts relating to the rights of women and orphans and it is for this reason that this Chapter has been named: 'Nisa' (Women).

Foremost in the revolutionary doctrines ordained by the Holy Qur'an for the emancipation of mankind are the injunctions relating to the 'Rights of Women' bestowing independent status recognizing her as an honourable personality in the context of social and family relations.

The terror and tyranny of social aggression based on the differences of sex, race, tribe and colour and economic disparities have been effectively eliminated and human dignity restored. The status of every individual stood elevated on a pedestal of complete equality and it is on this firm foundation that Islam has succeeded in founding a universal society based on the brotherhood of mankind. The social aggression based on the difference of sex in human societies all over the world and the freedom bestowed on womankind in Islam thirteen hundred years ago are dealt in this chapter. All prejudicial restrictions on the freedom of women have been forbidden in Islam.

#### **STATUS OF WOMEN IN HINDUISM AND CHRISTIANITY:**

Until recently, in every country woman was considered to be a slave with no rights whether she is in her husband's house or in her parent's house. Being a housewife enjoying the favour of her husband's love it is natural that she should wield some influence during the life- time of her husband and, it is but natural. Wealthy women wield some authority too as also a degree of independence. But for the ordinary, in their every-day life, she is no more than a doll in the hands of her husband, a slave deprived of her personality and 1- independence, she may not move and work with 2- independence in her own house, 3- she has no right to a share in the property of her husband in the event of his death, and no individuality and the husband is free to kill her at will and it is no crime! In short, she has no right to live after her husband's death; she must commit 'sati' - burn herself on her husband's pyre. However, she has been redeemed from this ghastly custom but she must have her head shaved (which custom is still prevailing) in order to distinguish her from the married women. And on social occasions her presence is avoided as being inauspicious. She is not permitted to remarry after her husband's death. On the spiritual side, salvation for her lies in the service of her husband. In the Christian society of Europe a husband had the right to sell his wife into slavery.

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1- In her youth to remain under the protection of father and after marriage, under the protection of her husband. (Manu)

2- In 1882 women had no right to property, even on her own earning. In other European countries too her position was similar.

3- In the English law of Blackstone's day, for example, a married woman was scarcely be said to have any personality, so great is the number of her disqualifications as to the holding of property, as to capacity to give evidence, as to the custody of her children, even as to her legal responsibility for crimes; and many of these disqualifications lasted down to present generation. "Hobhouse, Vol.I. Down to the ninth century the husband was possibly within his rights in killing his wife for a good reason.

In the Hindu religion the mean status accorded to women is in no way due to male jealousy of femal sex. It is un-natural for any man to be inimical towards his mother, or sister or daughter. What man is there who does not love his wife or fondle his daughters? Manu, the Hindu Law giver decrees that: "gods will not be kind towards any family where women are not held in honour, the families in which no respect is shown to women, their offerings will not be accepted and their good deeds will be fruitless and people who do not respect their sisters, mothers, daughters and daughters-in-law will perish" and in spite of such a decree how is that the women are condemned to such a low level of sudras? It is because the Aryan law givers are of the opinion that in her very nature a woman is unfaithful and wicked. It is hard to believe that woman are unreliable and faithless. If a woman is by nature sinful how is unreliable and faithless. If a woman is by nature sinful how is it that the Vedas decree that Yajnas performed without direct participation of the lady of the house cannot be performed? This question was mooted by no less a person than Dharma Raj with his Guru teacher Bishma. There is a whole chapter about this discourse in Maha Bharat at XII/73-8. Bhishma, the saintly teacher, proves that woman is the root of all that is evil. Rigved, Brahmanas and the other Dharma Sastras states that woman, by nature, is wicked, and jealous and unreliable and therefore she has no right to recite vedas, take part in religious rites.

This state of affairs is not exclusively relevant to Hinduism only; In Christianity woman remains a still more fallen creature. In the Western countries where Christianity enjoys predominance, women were suffering from even greater disabilities than the Hindu woman as is evident from the writings of their scholars and the clergy alike.

### **BIBLE**

"It is good for a man not to touch a woman; nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife."

(1 Cor. VII-1)

"Woman is the gate of hell, mother of all ills. She should blush with shame at the thought of her womanhood and live in perpetual penance for the sins of Eve."

"Of the numberless snares that the crafty enemy spreads for us over all the hills and fields of the world, the worst and the one which cannot avoid is woman; and stem, evil root, vicious fount, who persuaded our first parent to taste the forbidden fruit? A woman. Who forced the father to defile his daughter? A Woman."

In the Middle Ages, in England too, woman was in a state of slavery.

"In the English Common Law made the married woman almost a nullity. All her rights devolved on her husband. She could not make a Will, or be party to a contract, or appear on court. Her personal property and the earnings were his. Even after separation or divorce no account should be demanded from him."

"Neither the romantic service of the knight to his lady in certain phases of chivalry, nor the Cult of Virgin Mother, nor the many learned ladies and remarkable feminine personalities of the Renaissance helped women out of their lamentable civic and legal status. The medieval inquisitors and legalists saw only the uncanny, the degraded and the malignant aspects of the beings whose ancestors and archetype, Eve, had brought sin into the world; they saw only the chosen and appropriate instAR RUMent of Satan. The number of women burnt to death as witches in Germany alone are estimated by the Social Historian, John Scherr, is not less than one hundred thousand.

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\* Muller-Lyer : 'The Family'.

"Even after most of the concepts and customs of the Middle Ages had been profoundly changed by economic forces, the domain of the family was still largely under the shadow of the Canon Law, e.g. in the 18th and 19th centuries."

Why go so far? <sup>\*1</sup> Even after the French Revolution women were not accorded equality. When they appealed to the National Assembly, their Appeal was not even perused.

In 1860 'Anti-Slave Congress' was held in London. A delegation of women from America was refused participation in the proceedings on the plea that it is against the principles of religion. Until 1888 women were disallowed from taking admission in Medical Colleges. The Oxford University, until 1920, was refusing to award degrees to women. In the Cambridge University, even now, women have no right to vote in the senate.

I have not spoken about the status of women under the civilizations of Egypt, Greek, and Buddhist because they are dead civilizations. It is enough to say that the status of women was no better.

In this way the woman had no rights in all other religions and in all countries; they even denied that woman can have any personality of her own.

It was only Islam that emancipated her from all the social disabilities and gave her freedom to acquire education, and work for her spiritual salvation independently, she was given right of inheritance from her parents and husband and exercise full authority over her wealth. After her puberty she was independent to contract <sup>\*2</sup> marriage according to her wishes. If her marriage is proved cumbersome and unpleasant she is given the right to separation and seek divorce and remarry. She is the master of the money given to her as dower or property she has acquired through inheritance from her parents and anything that she earned by herself. No other religion has given so much independence and so many rights as Islam. In recent times women have been given certain rights through legislation by different countries but not by any religion. From this it is evident how complete is the religion of Islam in the matter of recognition of rights of every segment of the society.

Topics relating to the problems of women will be commented as and where these are mentioned as occasion arises.

Chapter four opens with the circumstance of creation of man and his mate (woman) 'of like nature' and urge the believers 'to reverence the wombs that bore you' and demand 'mutual rights'.

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<sup>\*1</sup> George, 'The Story of Woman.'

<sup>\*2</sup> Marriage is a contract between the spouses, drawn in the presence of three witnesses. It is, to state briefly, is 'consent and acceptance'.



## Respect women and her rights.

(90) IV/Verse-1

### TEXT

"O Mankind! reverence  
Your Guardian Lord,  
Who created you  
From a single person,  
Created of a like nature,  
His mate and from them twain  
Scattered like (seeds)  
Countless men and women; -  
Reverence Allah through Whom  
Ye demand your mutual (rights)  
And (reverence) the wombs  
(That bore you); for Allah  
Ever watches over you."

### COMMENTARY

Stress is laid on two points: (1) It has been made clear that both men and women were created from like 'species' (nature) - none superior to the other -and this directly strikes at the male conceit that man is superior and that the woman is inferior, and (2) urging man to reverence the womb that has borne him -in other words respect their rights. In the matter of mutual relations, particularly between the husband and the wife, man is placed in a position to exercise some authority but he should not abuse this opportunity to misuse authority to his exclusive advantage. Man is urged to respect the rights of women and hold them in reverence. It is stressed that Allah is watching over this particular aspect of his (man's) conduct in relation to his wife With Allah as a Witness between the two should live in amity, honouring mutual rights but not take undue advantage of the others weakness.

## RIGHTS OF THE ORPHANS:

(91) / Verse – 2

### TEXT

"To orphans restore their property  
(When they reach their age)  
Nor substitute (your) worthless things  
For (their) good ones; and devour not  
Their substance (by mixing it up)  
With your own. For this is  
indeed a great sin."

### COMMENTARY

The Holy Qur'an is urging men to respect the rights of the orphans. Children who lost their parents deserve love and are entitled to the highest consideration. The more influential and well placed relatives appropriate or misappropriate the rightful inheritance of the orphans generally. The society, in particular, has a moral obligation towards the helpless widowed women and their orphaned children to ensure that full justice is done to them in the matter of their inherited rights to property. Verses

The Aryan law givers do not appear to have given any importance to this aspect. It is perhaps because that the institution of joint family system in Hindu family laws ensures adequate protection by making the orphans a joint responsibility of the family. But social conditions are changing fast and families are fragmenting fast making it necessary for the provision of a law in this regard. It is for the legislators to step in.

**TEXT**

"If ye fear that ye shall not  
be able to deal justly  
With the orphans  
Marry women of your choice,  
Two, or three or four;  
But if ye fear that ye shall not  
Be able to deal justly (with them)  
Then only one, or (a captive)  
That your right hands possess,  
That will be more suitable,  
To prevent you  
From doing injustice"

**COMMENTARY**

In this verse it has been said that polygamy is permissible only on condition of being able to be just in treating them with perfect equality in their material wants and well being.

Christian missionaries are never tired of saying that Christianity prohibits polygamy whereas Islam permits it and as such Christianity is setting a far nobler ideal than Islam.

In Aryan law Books polygamy is not prohibited. Among the pauranic celebrities only Sri Rama is praised for being a monogamist and the rest are known to be polygamists. A Brahmin is permitted to take four wives at a time, - one each from the other three castes. Sri Krishna is known to have a thousand wives, Sri Rama's father Dasarath is known to have three wives and even the great Rishies are known to have more than one wives.

Now coming to Christianity, there is no specific provision for marriage in Bible. The Church, at different times and countries, set forth some provisions about marriage from time to time. Different Churches have different laws. Mormonites (Mormon' a religious organization founded in America in 1830 -officially called 'The Church of Jesus Christ of latter day saints) hold that polygamy is legal and permissible. \*<sup>1</sup> Martin Luther, the founder of the Protestant Church also holds the same view - that polygamy is legal and permissible. Polygamy was practiced in France. Emperor Dogobert is known to have three wives. A well known Christian scholar, L.T. Hobshouse in 'Morals in Evolution' (Vol.1 P/228) says that Christian Church considers even marriage as reprehensible and promoted such an attitude. That the root of all evil is woman and an instAR RUMent of the devil (Satan) and pollutes man is the view firmly held by the Church. But sex is recognized as a compelling urge sexual intercourse is allowed. How can anyone say that the Church has prohibited polygamy when it is basically against \*<sup>2</sup> marriage itself and ordains that 'celibacy' is the most desirable virtue? But the attitudes promoted by Islam and the Aryan sages are different. Aryan sages hold that marriage is the emblem of manliness and 'Grihasta' sram' (family life) is superior to 'sanyas a'sram' (celibacy and wandering shunning family as forbidden).

Even as oxygen is necessary for all animal life so is 'Griha's tram' round which life takes refuge and increases in progeny and that is why it is a much superior ideal to be desired says Manu (See 111/27:28) Islam gives utmost prominence to marriage. The Prophet said "Marrying is equal to fulfilling half the tenets of Islam, it protects man from sins and it forms the foundation of family and human society."

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\*<sup>1</sup> L.T. Hobshouse, 'Morals in Evolution "Vol.1 P/228.

\*<sup>2</sup> The Church regarded marriage as a concession to the weakness of the flesh. It is of the nature of a hindrance in spiritual duties. It is incompatible with the performance of sacraments, and thus continence is enjoined on priests.

In the context of polygamy we should better bear in mind one important aspect; - that the permission accorded is only 'conditional' and not a blanket rule in Islam. There are far too many conditions to restrict and restrain this practice when one is physically fit, financially able to support and have the moral strength to be able to observe the principle of equality. The best is monogamy.

The laws enunciated by the Holy Qur'an are for universal application and not especially meant for any one country or any one age. At one stage in the evolution of society the practice of polygamy may become desirable and even ameliorative. For, in Arabia of the Prophet's time, inter-tribal wars were very frequent in which large number of men are killed leaving a large number of widows who find themselves in a condition of destitution. In such adverse circumstances the only respectable alternative left for the widow is remarriage for sustenance, security, comfort and dignity. Due to wars the ratio of men and women is upset leaving too many women after great wars as it happened in Europe. In such circumstances many women resort to prostitution being unable to find a suitable husband, thus disgracing themselves and disgracing their families and defaming their nations. In such circumstances is not polygamy beneficial? It is to meet such abnormal circumstances that Islam has permitted polygamy.

### **(93) MARRIAGE:**

In Islam marriage is a social contract between a man and a woman, witnessed by three male witnesses before whom the man and the woman solemnly agree to the marriage - it is free consent and acceptance - in Islam it is known as 'EEJAB O QUBUL'. On this occasion it is customary to deliver a sermon by the presiding Qazi. This is a tradition introduced by Islam. In the ritual of marriage 'dower' forms another essential condition. The man shall have to offer a dower of a fixed amount which is written in the contract fixed through negotiation and prior acceptance depending on the social and economic status of the bride and the bridegroom. This amount is required to be paid to the guardian of the bride, - father or brother, and this is entirely the personal property of the bride and this is, legally considered, as a gift which cannot be withheld under any circumstances. In case it is not paid in the lifetime of the husband, it is paid from the inheritance he leaves behind.

In the Holy Qur'an words corresponding to 'Mehr' have been used which emphasize the sanctity of 'Mehr'. These are:- 1) 'Ajr' meaning 'gift'. (2) 'Sadqa' meaning money given in the performance of a righteous deed. (3) 'Fariza' means act ordained by Allah. From these citations the sanctity attached to 'Mehr' is amply highlighted.

What should be the amount of 'Mehr'? This has been clarified by the Holy Qur'an itself as follows:

11/236 "The wealthy according to his means, and the poor according to his means; - A gift of a reasonable amount is due from those who wish to do the right thing."

It is traditional to fix the amount according to the status of the bridegroom, and the status of the bride's family.

It is best to pay the amount in the form of cash or equivalent property. Thus, a Muslim woman obtains for exclusive benefit and authority, the amount of 'Mehr', her share in the father's or mother's inheritance and her share in the property of her husband when he dies. All these circumstances strengthen her economic independence. 'Mehr' is similar to the inheritance in modern terminology.

**(94) Women:- rights to inheritance.**

Before the advent of Islam no religion had entitled women to have any share in the property of her parents or husband. Decreeing equality of status between man and woman, bestowing on her economic independence to uphold her independence with financial resources the equality and independence of woman assumed reality. In the English Law there is no provision for 'inheritance'. Hindu Law has denied her right to inherit property of her father. Unmarried sisters may be entitled to a share in her brother's property to defray the expenses on her marriage as \* decreed by the Hindu Law givers. Some Law givers did oppose contending that the Law is prejudicial to the rights of females and important among them was 'Brihaspati' who was of the opinion that like her brothers she is also a part of his blood (the word used is limb) and if it is so how can an outsider who becomes her husband secure a share in her inheritance? But none listened to him.

Among the Jews daughters are not entitled to any share in their patrimony if there are sons; daughters may be entitled to their patrimony only if they have no brothers.

It is in our times that the world is looking forward to reformers to allow share to the daughters as well in their patrimony. Islam has decreed such right to patrimony fourteen hundred years back. In our times when civilization and social reform has spread and due recognition is accorded to the need for such reform is only natural. Fourteen hundred years ago, in a country where the woman was considered as a little better than a slave, in a country where the female infant was murdered as a custom, in a country where women were considered as a piece of property inherited from fathers in those dark ages how praiseworthy is the enactment of women's rights! The thinking public are invited to reflect over this aspect of Islam.

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\* In Manusmriti (Chapter 9, Sloka 118) it is decreed that the brothers shall part with a fourth of their patrimony to their unmarried sisters but this ruling has been interpreted to mean that married daughters are not entitled to any share.

K.T. Bhashyam Ayengar wrote to Gandhiji in this context - extract says:

"The principles of Hindu Law as at present administered are antiquated and are opposed to our sense of equity and justice. I shall give a few instances: 1-Near and dear relations like the sisters, daughters and daughters-in-law, the brother's widow and the step-mother altogether denied the right of inheritance etc. etc. (Young India, dated 13-10-1927).

## **AL - NISA:**

### **(95) IV/Verse-II**

#### **TEXT**

"Allah (thus) directs you  
As regards your children's  
(Inheritance); to the male,  
A portion equal to that  
Of two females; if only  
Daughters, two or more  
Their share is two-thirds,  
Of the inheritance;  
If only one, her share  
Is a half"

For parents, a sixth share  
Of the inheritance to each,  
If the deceased left children;  
If no children, and the parents  
Are the (only) heirs, the mother  
Has a third; if the deceased  
Left brothers or (sisters)  
The mother has a sixth.  
(The distribution of all cases  
is) after the payment  
Of legacies and debts.  
Ye know not whether  
Your parents or your children  
Are nearest to you  
In benefit. These are  
Settled portions ordained."

#### **COMMENTARY**

"Male is entitled to a portion equal to two portions of a female" the decree of the Holy Qur'an says. In other words the daughter gets half the share of a son. In this context let us bear in mind that the daughter is entitled to a share whether she is married or un-married. A question may arise as to why this inequality between male and female heir? The factual position is that a woman belongs to two families; - a to share in her father's/ancestor's property as well as a share of her husband's property in addition to the 'Mehr'. For example the 'Hindu Law Commission' appointed by the Government of Mysore in 1930 recommended that sister may get one-quarter of her brother's share and that too, only in the event of her being unmarried ! And then, the expenditure incurred on her marriage be debited to her patrimony.

In this verse, male means: male progeny and 'female' means female progeny.

**\*WILL to be executed before death:-** Will is operative only on a third of the assets left after payment of debts normally, the legal heirs. The 'Will' concern those of relatives and friend or charities, and not subject to the wishes of the legal heirs. The intellectuals and social scientists may be surprised to learn this aspect of arrangement decreed by Islam, and this is so very much keeping in agreement of with the modern economic thinking. According to the English Law the entire assets come under the 'Will' and the entire property may be distributed according to the Will. This method is considered unjust and Josiah Wedgewood, a noted economist, in his work 'Economics of Inheritance' (p/201) has observed:

"Judged by its effects on distribution, our system of inheritance is clearly indefensible on economic grounds."

Under the Islamic Law of Inheritance, a wealthy man can exercise definite rights in the matter of disposal of the property left behind. Now a days, in France, Denmark and Belgium a wealthy man can will only one-third of his property according to his wishes. The economists have considered this method as eminently just and the English reformists are clamoring for the introduction of this method.

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\*It obligatory on the part of the faithful "to make a bequest to parent and next of kin" at the time when death approaches. See verse - 180/11 ('AL - BAQARAH')

## **(96) PUNISHMENT FOR ADULTERY:**

Women hold their honour high because they are custodians of the honour and dignity of the family of their fathers and husbands and the whole progeny. If she holds her honour high it is honouring the family her parents and the family of her husband. All religions urge their followers to be vigilant in this respect to ensure that the woman guards her honour and remain faithful to her husband.

In all countries, in all ages and in all societies very strict punishments are decreed for the adulterous women.

"the adultress woman's nose, lips and ears shall be cut off and paraded along the streets and then, in an open public place, she must be cut to pieces and thrown before dogs."  
(Brihaspati, XXII/16)

"If a married woman commits adultery her head shall be shaved, and given all sorts of menial jobs of cleaning."  
(Narad XII/90-91)

\*<sup>1</sup> "Husband has been given the right to kill his adulterous wife. Such authority was given in China.

\*<sup>2</sup> Among the Jews there was a custom allowing the husband to burn adulterous wife.

In this manner, all over the world, ghastly punishments were meted out to the women for adultery. As against these arbitrary judgements on the basis of suspicion Islam has laid down a judicious procedure. In the first instance, there must be ample proof of her guilt and not mere suspicion. The Holy Qur'an says:-

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\*<sup>1</sup> L.T.Hobhouse 'Morals in Evolution' Vol-1 p/198, 214, 203.

\*<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

## **"IN THE NAME OF GOD THE MOST MERCIFUL AND MOST GRACIOUS"**

XXIV/Versus ('NUR')

### **TEXT**

- 2- "The Woman and the man  
Guilty of adultery or fornication,-  
Flog each of them  
With a hundred stripes;  
Let not compassion move you  
In their case, in a matter  
Prescribed by Allah, if ye  
Believe  
In Allah and the last Day;  
And let a party  
Of the Believers  
Witness their punishment."
- 4- "And those who launch  
A charge against chaste women,  
And produce not four witnesses,  
(to support their allegation),-  
Flog them with eighty stripes;  
And reject their evidence  
Ever after; for such men  
Are wicked transgressors;-
- 5- "Unless they repent thereafter  
And mend (their conduct);  
For Allah is Oft-Forgiving,  
Most Merciful"
- 6- "And for those who launch  
A charge against their spouses,  
And have (in support)  
No evidence but their own,-  
Their solitary evidence  
(Can be received) If they  
Bear witnesses four times  
(With an oath) by Allah  
That they are solemnly  
Telling the truth"
- 7- "And the fifth (oath)  
(Should be) that they solemnly  
Invoke the curse of Allah  
On themselves if they  
Tell a lie."

### **COMMENTARY**

Islam does not target the woman only;  
and lays down a judicious procedure for  
resolving the issue;

Those who launch false charges of  
adultery against chaste women are equally  
liable to severe punishment.

It is worth knowing the reasons as to  
why women resort to prostitution.

The reasons may be:

- 1- Failure to get an eligible match. Child  
marriages and marriages without the  
consent of the girl.
- 2- Prohibition on widow marriage.
- 3- Woman denied the right to obtain  
divorce in case she finds her husband  
cruel and abominable.
- 4- Denial of economic freedom.

Generally the above factors are  
responsible for pushing women into  
prostitution. On the other hand the Holy  
Qur'an has decreed marriage only after  
attaining puberty, and marriage strictly  
subject to her consent, making widow  
marriage respectable, and according a  
personality of their own through economic  
independence has raised her morale and  
courage according to her best wishes. It has  
been acknowledged by Western observers  
that prostitution is rare in Muslim countries.



- 8- \* "But if would avert  
The punishment from the wife,  
If she bears witness  
Four times (with an oath)  
By Allah, that (her husband)  
In telling a lie"
- 9- "And the fifth (oath)  
Should be that she solemnly  
Invokes the wrath of Allah  
On herself if (her accuser)  
Is telling the truth"

#### **`UN-NATURAL SEX RELATIONS'**

**IV/Verses: 15, 16, and 17.**

**`NISA'**

- (97) These verses are regarding unnatural lewd (sex) conduct between two males or two females which is equally reprehensible.

This practice appears to have entered India through Persia where it was rampant. Even before that the practice has been noted by 'Vatsayana' in his Kama Sutras. This is vile and dirty and has been strictly prohibited in Islam.

#### **CONDUCT TOWARDS WOMEN:**

(98) IV/Verse - 19

##### **TEXT**

"O ye who believe!  
Ye are forbidden to inherit  
Women against their will,  
Nor should ye treat them  
With harshness, that ye many  
Take away part of the dower  
Ye have given them, - except  
where they have been guilty  
Of open lewdness;  
On the contrary live with them  
On a footing of kindness and equity  
If ye take a dislike unto them  
It may be that ye dislike  
A thing, and Allah brings about  
Through it a great deal of good."

##### **COMMENTARY**

The concluding portion of this verse forms the basic code of conduct prescribed for men by Allah in their relations with their wives. See what the Holy Qur'an says:

Is not the Holy Qur'an urging the faithful to treat their women with kindness and not to be harsh? If the woman has a tolerable fault or shortcoming what bar is there to leave her one may ask. Every life may have some fault or short coming and that is natural. After all, what we perceive as fault may not be a fault at all and may prove to be a blessing later. One should not take hasty decisions and it is best to view these with understanding and consideration and not by being ill-treating or by abusing at will, but to be just and considerate.

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\* (8) In either case the marriage is dissolved and the woman acquitted of the charge).



**(99) IV/Verse - 20**

**TEXT**

"But if ye decide to take  
One wife in place of another,  
Even if ye had given the latter  
A whole treasure for dower,  
Take not the least bit of it back  
Would ye take it by slander  
And a manifest wrong?

21- And how would ye take it  
When ye have gone in  
Unto each other, and they have  
Taken from you a solemn covenant?

**COMMENTARY**

The Holy Qur'an is again reiterating the rights of women. It is urging the faithful not to dispossess her of the property and ornaments etc. once bestowed on her at the time of marriage. There are some who act perfidiously and get back a part of the dower that has been promised. The Holy Qur'an is strictly warning against breach of trust.

**INHERITING WOMEN:**

**(100) Verse – 22**

In Arabia of the prophet's time there was a heinous custom of yore whereby sons would inherit their father's wives. This was prevailing world wide. L.T. Hobhouse, in his work "Morals in Evolution" (Vol.I - P/146) observes: "In many cases a son inherits his father's wives with the exception of his own mother, along with the rest of the property. The Holy Qur'an has prohibited this abominable custom.

**(101) ('VISA') FORBIDDEN ACTS CONSIDERED MOST HEINOUS**

IV/Verse - 31 (Section - 5)

**TEXT**

31- "If ye (but) eschew  
The most heinous  
Of the things  
Which ye are forbidden to do,  
Out of you  
All the evils in you,  
And admit you to a gate  
Of great honour"

**COMMENTARY**

In the first thirty verses of this section are enumerated 'forbidden acts' which are considered the most heinous and if men and women firmly abstain and refrain, Allah will bestow His Mercy, and open the 'gates of honour' on them.

The Holy Prophet has clarified that this 'most heinous crimes' are seven. Ibn-e- Kathir, the noted commentator, has gathered all the relevant savings of the Prophet and named the following acts as crimes most 'heinous.

(1) Idolatry and polytheism. (2) charging interest (3) sorcery (4) usurping the property of orphans (5) remaining aloof or backing out of Jihad (6) Accusing chaste women of adultery (7) ill treatment of parents (8) taking liqueurs (9) Adultery (10) stealing and banditry (11) harming the self respect of people (12) lying (13) giving false witness. These 'most heinous crimes' are taken from the Prophets saying as compiled by Ibn-e-Kathir. And these 'most heinous crimes will not be forgiven by Allah.

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**(102) / 32 CONTRASTS BETWEEN MAN AND WOMAN THAT  
ESTABLISH MAN'S SUPERIORITY OVER WOMEN IN FAMILY.**

It is in the matter of intellect and physiological construction that man has enabled himself to establish his superiority over women. This has now been confirmed by the Western scientists after a careful investigation of the natural scheme of things in which man is better placed compared to the woman. The woman is disabled due to her natural confinement for three days in a month due to her courses and then, when she is pregnant, she is disabled for four months in a year before and after delivery. Therefore, women workers, all over the world, are entitled to only two-thirds of the pay or wages of a man. Women cannot undertake hard physical tasks. And then, she is chosen by nature itself to look after the new-born which is virtually a whole time job leaving little time to earn a living. So there is a natural division of duties between man and women. It falls to the lot of man to earn a living for the family and protect it through the vicissitudes of life. This is how it followed that man became the natural head of the family and establish his authority over woman.

Now the times have changed and women are in open competition with men in every walk of life and are demanding equality with men. The Holy Qur'an is preaching for moderation and restrain from mutual jealousies. The Holy Qur'an says:-

**IV/32- (NISA)**

**TEXT**

"And in no wise covet  
Those things in which God  
Has bestowed His gifts  
More freely on some of you  
Than on others; to men  
Is allotted what they earn,  
And to women what they earn;  
But ask God of His Bounty  
For God hath full knowledge  
Of all things."

'Neither of the two should be jealous of the other' is what the Holy Qur'an preaches. Some commentators are unanimous in their view that this verse refers to relations between men and women.

**(103) Verse - 34.**

In this verse the Holy Qur'an is explicit in asserting the superiority of men over women but this is in no way contrary to the independence of women; for independence of women is a moral duty and the division between the duties of men and women is a physiological necessity and duty ordained. In the matter of the gift of intellect, she is not the equal of man. For these reasons man has been chosen by God to be the bread-winner of the family and its protector and husbands the woman in all respects and it is the duty of the woman to be obedient and dutiful and to guard the lineage and observe absolute fidelity to man. The Holy Qur'an says:-

**34 - TEXT**

"Men are the protectors  
And maintainers of women,  
Because God has given  
The one more (strength),  
Than the other, and because  
They support them  
From their means,  
Therefore the righteous women  
Are devoutly obedient, and guard  
In the husband's absence  
What God would have them guard."

**RACE RELATIONS:**

**(106) IV/ 49 - 50 (NISA)**

In the marginal verses the Holy Qur'an is condemning the arrogant attitude of those who claim to be the sanctified ones by virtue of lineage or race and colour.

In every country there are some or other people who claim that they are 'the pure or the sanctified ones' by virtue of birth and rest of 'impure' and belong to the enslaved castes or out-castes. They also hold that they are the chosen ones for salvation. In the same way, the Brahmins in our country, claim that they are 'pure' by birth and are of divine origin. Manu, the Hindu Law giver holds that a Brahmin, 'whether he is wise or ignorant, is divine'

(Manu Smriti 9 / 317).

Even in modern times there is race and colour arrogance, - against the 'black races' and is the cause of inter-racial prejudices and strife. In Africa there are people whose colour is black and in America too, there are Negroes and, the Europeans whose colour is white. The Negroes and the non-Brahmins alike in India are discriminated and oppressed. The black people are segregated to live in ghettos far from the white habitations, the black man does not get the same wages as his white colleague, the black ones are segregated in schools and churches even, the black ones cannot enter hotels and even travel in the same railway compartment as the white man. Similar are the disabilities heaped on the outcasts in particular and the generality of the non-Brahmins. In short they do not enjoy equal political and social rights as the upper castes. This sort of base mental attitude is due to the concept that some are born 'sanctified and pure' and the others are born 'impure'. This is all well known and therefore I have not gone into this situation in greater detail.

Dr. T.J. Woofter, Jr. Ph. D in "Agencies for inter-racial Co-operation in United States" and in 'Christian Mission in the light of Race Conflict' P/25 - observes:

\* "White people assumed that subordination was natural or divinely decreed status of the Negro and Negroes had a traditional subordination to live down."

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\* In the South (States of North America) Statutes prescribe separation on common carriers, in schools and in public places, ...As the Negroes have increased, some Northern States have tried to set up separate schools and some owners of theatres and restaurants employ subtle means to exclude Negroes.....  
At one place the Negroes enter the Railway station through the same gate with white people, but at another they use a different gate; at the place they are seated at the front of the street car and at another the rear." (ibid p/28).  
Revd. J. Dexter Tayler, "Relations between the Black and White Races in South Africa" says: "At Post Offices, Bank, railway station and all public buildings he (the South African native) must seek separate counters and often finds improper and ungracious service." (P/113)

Mental attitudes, whether it is in India or in the Western countries, in ancient times or in modern times are the same. This sort of racial arrogance and race superiority always persisted and, in our own days even, as is clear from the quotations cited. Seen in this light, the great revolution brought by Islam in bringing about a change in mental attitudes should be evident. How far Islam pricked the Christian conscience and set them to think afresh may be seen from the following quotations:-

Speaking at the meeting of the International Missionary Council held in Jerusalem 'Prof. Jabao (probably a South African Negro) observed:-

\*1" One of the great difficulties in the way of the black people in South Africa building up their own Church is the feeling that even under Christian Missions there is no equality in Church or state. Islam is gaining more African adherents because of the attitude on this question.... The Government enacts all sorts of Laws against black races, just because of their colour... There is land segregation... and social segregation In pretoria I cannot ride in a train."

Another prominent Missionary, J.H. Oldham, -'Christianity and Race Problem' (P/262) observes:

"A visitor to a mosque enquired what place was reserved for the Nawab during divine service."What? "exclaimed his guide, "A place for the Nawab in the House of God? The Nawab and the beggar stand side by side. "He spoke the simple truth. In the House of God distinctions of class or race count for nothing. Unless the Christian Church can exhibit a brotherhood as real as that of Islam, we cannot be surprised if the latter is more successful in winning the allegiance of Pagan peoples."

In this context it may not be inappropriate to quote an incident from the Prophet's own life. It is this; One day a Negro from Abyssinia came to the prophet and said that he has a doubt and would the Prophet clear it? The Prophet replied relate your doubt without fear and the Negro asked: "O Prophet If I adopt your faith in all sincerity and follow it with full devotion can I be admitted in the heaven by your side?

\*2"The Prophet replied: "surely you will" and "There is no doubt about it."  
(NISA) IV/

#### **TEXT**

49 -" Nast thou not turned  
Thy vision to those  
Who claim sanctity  
For Themselves ?  
Nay - but God  
Doth sanctify  
Whom He pleaseth  
But never will they  
Fail to receive justice  
In the least little thing"

50- "Behold how they invent  
A lie against God!  
But that by itself  
Is a manifest sin!

---

\*1 Parts of speech regarding the equality decreed by Islam were deleted.. ("Missions and Race Conflict - Vol.IV - P/123)

\*2 Quoted from 'The Commentary of Ibne Kathir' (Ch: 5 - Note - 56).

**TEXT**

"O ye who believe!  
Obey God, and obey the Apostle  
And those charged  
With authority among you.  
If ye differ in anything  
Among yourselves, refer it  
To God and His Apostle,  
If ye do believe in God  
And the Last Day;  
That is best and most suitable  
For final determination."

**COMMENTARY**

In this verse the believers are urged to obey those who are entrusted to rule. A question arises if it is mandatory to obey if the ruler is arbitrary in his decisions and is a tyrant. Answer to this question is found in the Prophet's practice. If the ruler is just and acts within the framework of laws enunciated in the Holy Qur'an the believers are to obey and are within their right to defy if the ruler transgresses, his orders are arbitrary and aggressive and he transgresses his bounds. The Prophet \*<sup>1</sup> proclaimed: "even if an Abyssinian slave is appointed over you, obey him."

\*<sup>2</sup> "Even if the ruler appointed over you is a disabled Abyssinian slave and he issues orders according to the Holy Qur'an, obey him and listen to him."

The command of the prophet to obey those in authority are conditional - "if the orders are according to the laws of the Holy Qur'an, are just and righteous". All legislation or orders by a Ruler which are repugnant to the Holy Qur'an and the preaching's and practice of the Prophet - according to 'Hadith' and 'Sunnah' are illegal and invalid.

**NO CONTRADICTION IN THE REVELATION**

**TEXT**

"Do they not consider  
The Qur'an (with care)?  
Had it been from other  
Than God, they would surely  
Have found therein  
Much discrepancy."

**COMMENTARY**

The Holy Qur'an is asking "Don't the unbelievers carefully think over the teachings (of the Holy Qur'an)?" Is it possible for the ordinary folk to understand the teachings of the Holy Qur'an? Is there any doubt that the revelation is from God? The Holy Qur'an says if the Revelation was not from God there would have been many discrepancies. In the preceding note (N-71)

I have indicated how the social, economic, political, and spiritual preachings and sanctions enacted by the Holy Qur'an are so rational and simple, practicable and universal in application and complete in all respects. Now-a-days physical and social scientists have discovered many truths which accord with the teachings of the Holy Qur'an centuries ago and it is no exaggeration to affirm that no other religion has enunciated such complete laws in the history of mankind. There are many contradictions and conflicting laws in the ancient Scriptures that have come down to us. The Holy Qur'an is free from any contradiction, clear and rational and its teachings are ideally suited to provide sound guide lines to erring humanity since they accord with the natural laws in all walks of life, be it in the social sciences or the Mental and Moral sciences; not only this, the scientists have derived inspiration from the teachings of the Holy Qur'an.

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\*<sup>1</sup> 'Bokhari' Commentary of 'Ibn-e-Kathir'.

\*<sup>2</sup> 'Muslim'.

In our days the Scriptures available to us as the 'word of God' are not original because they were not preserved in writing. They were distorted and tampered, - a fact which is well known. In this context, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, says this about the Aryan Scriptures:-

"Everywhere we had contradictory notions. In religion there was Vedic polytheism and sacrifices tempered by Upanishad monism and spiritual life.— In eschatology, there was the conception of rebirth mixed up with the ideas of hell. But the true was overwhelmed by the false and, and the chaos of Brahmanical religion, with all its conflicting theories, soon reached a climax in the post - Upanishad or the pre-Buddhist period." ('Indian Philosophy' Vol.-I, P/265).

Writing about the Upanishads, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, says:

"Not being systematic philosophy, or the product of the same age, they contain much that is inconsistent and unconscious."

(ibid p/138)

"So numerous are their suggestions of truth, so various are their guesses of God, that almost anybody may seek in them what he wants and find what he seeks, and every school of dogmatic may congratulate itself on finding its own doctrine in the sayings of the Upanishads." (ibid p/140)

Concerning the Bible, a Biblical scholar, V. Phillips says:-

"Some of their (Gospels') statements of fact are quite erroneous, and the data are often in direct contradiction to one another."

(Churches and Modern Thought p/62)

Prof. Schmiedel observes in, Encyclopedia Biblical, art; Resurrection:

"Gospel accounts (of Resurrection) exhibit contradictions of the most glaring kind."

The Holy Qur'an says; that it is improbable that there could be any conflicting and mutually contradictory statements in what is revealed, and this is yet one more evidence of its divine origin.

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#### **FIGHT FOR THE CAUSE OF ALLAH:**

(109) IV/Verses - 74, 75, 76 (NISA):

The believers are urged to fight in the cause of Allah with those who took to aggression and oppressed and ill treated men, women and children for no other fault than saying 'Our Lord is Allah'. Muslims are not to fight against those who are neutral. The Christian missionaries are never tired of propagating the lies that Muslims are commanded to fight all those who have not accepted Islam. The fact is that it is the Christian clergy who ordered persecution of Non-Christians. For centuries the Church had been persecuting Jews and the rest of Non-Christians.

In this context, Dr. S. Cheetham, who was once the Arch Deacon of Rochester, who is a prominent Church Historian, says:-

"In the year 358 A.C. (Emperor Constantius) forbade heathenish ceremonies under pain of death and confiscation of goods. Prefects who did not enforce the law were to be liable to the same punishments." \*<sup>1</sup>

"When Theodosius I, one of the greatest rulers of the declining empire, became sole ruler of the empire, he forbade in the most emphatic terms all sorts and conditions of men to offer sacrifices to senseless idols, or even to practise private worship before the domestic shrines. To pour and libation of wine to the tutelary genius or to hang a garland before the Prelate, was made criminal, though heathen worship still lingered in Rome. But the zeal of the Christian mobs had outrun the legislation of the emperors Hypotia, a distinguished teacher of Neo-platonic school at Alexandria ... was seized one day by a rabble of Christians and dragged from her carriage into a neighbouring Church, where she was killed with potsherds and her body torn limb from limb, carried out and burnt." \*<sup>2</sup>

Neither the Holy Qur'an nor the Prophet nor even the Caliphs in latter times nor the kings and emperors of the many Muslim dynasties ever resorted to such inhuman methods. Christian clergy and the Church alike inflicted oppression as is well known and I am not discussing this topic. Those who wish to know more about these oppressions are advised to read the following books:

A History of Crime of Blasphemy 'By N.D. Knoxo and Heresy'.

`The History of Criminal Law' By Sir James Stephen.

`Penalties upon Opinion' By Charles Bonar.

#### **(110) Section - 16:**

IV ('NISA'): Verses 105 to 112:

#### **SHIFTING THE BLAME ON OTHERS.**

It has been decreed by the Holy Qur'an that committing a crime and then shifting the blame on others is a double sin - The Commentators have explained the circumstance as under:- This relates to a case of one, Ta'ima ibn Ubairaq who was nominally a Muslim but in fact a hypocrite who stole an armour and hid it in the house of a Jew and later on, the armour was recovered from the house of the Jew. The case was referred to the Prophet. The Jew denied the charge and accused Ta'ima. The Apostle accepted the plea of the Jew and acquitted him. It is on this occasion that the verse - 112 was revealed. (and 105-111)

It is a great responsibility to preside in a dispute and deliver judgement. It is only natural that the party whose witnesses are strong in evidence carry weight and the party obtains a favorable judgment. But man is not all-knowing and he may be wrong in his judgement. The party which wins a favorable judgment thinks that it has duped and won but it is in a loss. Says the Holy Qur'an:

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\*<sup>1</sup> 'A History of the Christian Church' P/201.

\*<sup>2</sup> Cheetham ibid P/207 - 208.



### **TEXT**

- 112- "But if anyone earns  
A fault or a sin  
And throws it on to one  
That is innocent.  
He carries (on himself)  
(Both) a falsehood  
And a flagrant sin."

Two more incidents are cited below from the life of the Prophet.

- 1- "One day the Prophet heard loud voices of wordy duel. The Prophet came out and the parties requested him to settle the dispute. The Prophet said: "Listen! I am after all a human being. I will judge on the basis of what I heard. One of the disputants may be a clever one and the opposite one a simpleton and puts up a weak case. I may be tempted to fall in with the clever one and be guilty of delivering a wrong judgment and go to hell. Now it is up to you to decide between yourselves as righteousness demands."
- 2- "In the matter of a dispute over property two Christians both brothers. The Prophet was requested to adjudicate. After delivering his judgment the Prophet turned to them and said: "On the strength of my judgment don't occupy the property on which you have no right; that will hang round your neck on the way to hell." The two were moved and tears rolled down their cheek; One cried that he will give away the property to his brother and the other too repeated the same. The Prophet advised them to divide the property amicably between themselves and the two divided the property among themselves with mutual affection and friendship.

(Masnade Ahmed)

### **MONOTHEISM: Polytheism - Unpardonable**

#### **(111) 'NISA' IV:**

##### **TEXT**

- 116- "God forgiveth not  
(The sin of) joining other gods  
With Him; but He forgiveth  
Whom He pleaseth other sins  
Than this; one who joins  
Other gods with God,  
Hath strayed far, far away  
(From the Right)"

##### **COMMENTARY**

Belief in One God is the foundation of the religion enunciated by the Holy Qur'an and monotheism (not associating other deities with God) is the heart and soul of the religion of Islam.

One who denies the Oneness of God does not believe in the natural laws and falls an easy prey to superstition and thence into evil ways. S. Radha -Krishnan, the world renowned thinker and writer and philosopher an acknowledged authority on Indian philosophy, has elucidated this point :-

"We cannot have plurality of Gods, for religious consciousness is against it ... Self surrender of man to God, the central fact of religious experience, is possible only with One God."

"Monotheism is inevitable with any true conception of God. The Supreme can only be one. We cannot have two supreme and unlimited beings."

"Trust in natural law means faith in One God. The advance of this conception implies the paralysis of superstition. An orderly system of nature has no room for miraculous interferences in which alone superstition and confused thought find the signs of polytheism."

(Indian Philosophy' Vol. I, P/90 - 91)



Satan vowed before God that he will \*<sup>1</sup> mislead mankind, rake up base desires in them (mankind) that they may deviate from the path of righteousness. (See following verse - 119)

(112) / Verse - 117 - **WORSHIP OF FEMALE DEITIES.**  
(IV `LISA)

**TEXT**

"(The Pagans) leaving Him  
Call but upon female deities;  
They call but upon Satan  
The persistent rebel"

**COMMENTARY**

Worshipping of idols of female deities is cited as a more debased form of \*<sup>2</sup> idolatry as an offshoot of polytheism. Those of the educated ones who have studied 'Saktaa' cult and the like sects know very well the

horrors and depredations and the ghastly customs introduced in Hindu societies. As an example, the following 'sloka' is reproduced below from 'Agamaprakasam' authored by Hon'ble Rao Bahadur Gopala Desmukh:-

"The dreadful Kali with flowing hair should be worshipped with intoxicated foods. She had four hands, a garland of four heads dripping with the blood of 'Rakshasas' (the devils) she slaughtered, she drank their blood. She has a sword in her hands. Dark as the cloud is her ornament. A necklace of skulls graces her neck - her throat is red with blood and she holds two corpses - she lives in cemetery and stands on the chest of her husband."

Such is the description of the dreadful idol of Kali, the female deity worshipped by the 'Sakteyas' (worshippers of Siva) - and those who practice black magic. 'Even a multitude of those who are not Sakteyas worship this deity with unutterable ritual. One can only imagine very well the perversions and depths of ignorance of those who practice such evil and debased religious practices.

**Slitting of ears of she camels – superstition**

(113) / ('NISA') IV: Verse - 119

**TEXT**

"I will mislead them,  
And I will create  
In them false desires; I will  
Order them to slit the ears  
Of cattle, and to deface  
The (fair) nature created  
By God" "Whoever,  
Forsaking God, take Satan  
For a friend, hath  
Of a surety suffered  
A loss that is manifest"

**COMMENTARY**

An example of superstition is cited here - slitting the ears of cattle. This superstition is prevalent in India. Omens - God or bad, considering some days as auspicious and some as inauspicious, wishing boons from their female deities with whom they associate infectious diseases such as small pox and vowing annual sacrifices (even human sacrifices) to appease, shaving their heads and offering hair, and many other gory practices during the ritual.

All these gory and evil practices are born out of lack of Belief in One God. They do not realize that nothing can happen without the Will of God and nothing can take place outside the order decreed in nature by God. Belief in one God alone can demolish ignorance and superstition, and this is the view of the Holy Qur'an. The Holy Qur'an is urging mankind to accept the belief in One God.

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\*<sup>1</sup> Dr. Sir S. Radhakrishnan, 'Indian Philosophy' Vol.I P/90 - 91.

\*<sup>2</sup> Evil and despicable customs that have spread in India have been described and condemned by Rao Bahadur Vireslingam Pantulu and the great reformer Dayanand Saraswati.

## **WOMEN HAVE EQUAL RIGHT TO ENTER PARADISE.**

### **(114) Verse - 124:**

#### **TEXT**

"If any do deeds  
Of righteousness, -  
Be they male or female –  
And have faith,  
They will enter Heaven,  
And not the least injustice  
Will be done to them"

#### **COMMENTARY**

All ancient religions are of the view that women are not entitled to salvation. In this and in many other verses, the Holy Qur'an is affirming that women are also equally entitled to enter Heaven if they do 'righteous deeds'.

## **SELF SURRENDER - PROPHET ABRAHAM, A MODEL.**

### **(115) Verses - 125**

#### **TEXT**

"Who can be better  
In religion than one  
Who submits his whole self  
To God, does good,  
And follows the way  
Of Abraham the true in Faith?  
For God did take  
Abraham for a friend"

#### **COMMENTARY**

Self surrender wholly to God is the central theme of religion and the Prophet Abraham was one. He was born in a family which made idols and born amidst the idolaters and yet found out the deception and evil in that and became a firm believer in One God. He is cited as a model here.

### **(116) IV ('NISA') Verses - 128**

#### **TEXT**

"If a wife fears  
Cruelty or desertion  
On her husband's part,  
There is no blame on them  
If they arrange  
An amicable settlement  
Between themselves;  
And such settlement is best;  
Even though men's souls  
Are swayed by greed  
But ye do good  
And practice self-restraint,  
God is well acquainted  
With all that ye do."

#### **COMMENTARY**

In family life if quarrels arise it is not un-natural. The man may lose affection for his wife and cease to respect her but it is not right that he should altogether cut the bonds and divorce her. If the husband and wife reconcile they would be wiping off their sins and begin afresh a life of affection and regard. The Holy Qur'an is urging moderation and mutual respect and says 'God is All-knowing.'

129 "Ye are never  
 Able to be fair and just  
 As between women  
 Even if it is  
 Your ardent desire;  
 But turn not away  
 (From woman) altogether,  
 So as to leave her (as it were)  
 Hanging (in air)  
 If ye come to a friendly  
 Understanding and practice  
 Self-restraint, God is  
 Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful

### **COMMENTARY**

If a divorce becomes inevitable it may be so. God is the Sustainer and purpose of this verse is that the divorced woman will not be caste out and God will care for her sustenance equally well.

In this context it is noteworthy that the Holy Qur'an gives the woman the right of remarriage.

### **(117) Verse – 139**

#### **TEXT**

"But if they disagree  
 (And must part), God  
 Will provide abundance  
 For all from His  
 All-reaching bounty;  
 For God is He  
 That careth for all  
 And is Wise"

#### **COMMENTARY**

The Holy Qur'an affirms that if at all separation becomes necessary, let them separate. Allah will provide the woman sustenance from His bounty.

On the other hand Christianity considers it a sin to marry a divorced woman. The Bible says:

"But I may say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife saving for the cause of fornication, causing her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced commiteth adultery."

(St. Matthew: Vo. 32, Also XVI.180)

God is Oft Forgiving and the Most Merciful and the Holy Qur'an is urging mankind to reconcile and live in amity and respect and failing that, to choose more amenable conjugal relation through remarriage.

The injunctions of the Church were obeyed in the past but in modern times, people are treating this as unjust and harsh and are advocating the way the Holy Qur'an has enjoined. Even in India, men and women are agitating for widow re-marriage and are founding widow homes to provide them a respectable refuge. Gradually the world is leaning towards the teachings of the Holy Qur'an in this respect, and this is one instance in evidence.

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## **POLYTHEIST DESIRES:**

(118) / Verse – 131

### **TEXT**

".....But if ye  
Deny Him, Lo! unto Allah  
Belong all things."

134- "If one desires  
A reward in this life,  
In God's (gift) is the reward  
(Both) of this life  
And of the Hereafter;  
For God is He who heareth  
And seeth all things"

### **COMMENTARY**

Polytheists who worship a multitude of gods have a different god for each different desire or wish this entire world only which has no permanence. In India, those who covet riches pray the goddess Lakshmi and those who desire learning pray the goddess Saraswati and those who indulge in black magic pray goddess Kali and yet those who desire strength pray Hanuman and so on. In this manner the number of gods has become countless.

The Holy Qur'an is assuring that God's Grace is unbounded and it is He who bestows material gifts of this world and spiritual gifts in the life hereafter; He sees and hears.

## **SECTION – 20                      GIVING FALSE EVIDENCE:**

**(119) 'NISA": Verse - 135**

The Holy Qur'an says that giving false evidence is a great sin. Even if true witness causes harm to yourself or your parent or those who you love, the Holy Qur'an urges the believers to stand firm in the cause of justice. This is righteousness and this is the truth.

### **WITNESS - TO BE FIRM AND JUST**

(IV)/135-

### **TEXT**

"Ye who believe!  
Stand out firmly  
For justice, as witnesses  
To God, even as against  
Yourselves, or your parents,  
Or your kin and whether  
If be (against) rich or poor  
For God can best protect both,  
Follow not the lusts  
(Of your hearts), lest ye  
Swerve, and if ye  
Distort (justice) or decline  
To do justice, verily  
God is well acquainted  
With all that ye do."

### **COMMENTARY**

Do not think that all religions have accepted the truth enunciated by the Holy Qur'an in this regard. See what the Christian clergy says:-

**\*1** "Ligguori, in his treatise on oaths, Question 4, asks if it is allowable to use ambiguity, or equivocal words, to deceive the judge when under oath, and at No. 151 he answers:"  
"It is a certain and common opinion amongst all divines that for a Just cause that it is "lawful to use equivocation in the ways laid down, and to confirm it with an oath; and state a just cause we mean all that can do any good to the body or the soul."

"When a crime is well concealed, the witness, and even the criminal, may and even must swear that the crime has not been committed."

This is just one instance that has been cited, the author has seen many more such writings, see **\*2** Chap: 13 of his book.

From a reading of the above verse it will be seen how firm the Holy Qur'an is in this regard.

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**\*1** Paster Chiniquay, 'Fifty years in the Church of Rome' P/91-92.

**\*2** Ibid.

**(120) / 'NISA' Verse - 139**

**TEXT**

"Yea, to those who take  
For friends unbelievers  
Rather than Believers;  
Is it honour they seek  
Among them? Nay –  
All honour is with God."

**COMMENTARY**

The one who is of firm conviction that 'honour is with God' will not hanker after honours by trying to please the unbelievers and curry favour for all honours both material and spiritual, are to be sought in the abounding Grace of God only.

Therefore it is wrong to serve a multitude of gods and their idols for attaining honours. Conferring material and spiritual honours and blessings is within the power of Allah alone, and one whose conviction is firm in this belief can never worship idols nor will bow before any individual or society howsoever strong. To bow before any unrighteous man or society amounts to denial of God. Such as those whose conviction in God is strong will maintain their dignity and self-respect and grow stronger in faith and never will they bow before any other power. This promotes mental attitude which is firm, kind and winning and leaving an abiding influence on others.

**(121) 'NISA' Verse - 142**

**TEXT**

"The Hypocrites - they think  
They are over-reaching God,  
But he will over-reach them;  
When they stand upto prayer,  
They stand without earnestness,  
To be seen of men,  
But little do they hold  
God in remembrance;

**COMMENTARY**

There are some who perform the rites and rituals of the religion just to show the people. Such as these want to deceive the world and to deceive God. These are the hypocrites. This also equally applies to those who conspire to secure political influence and gains.

**(122) 'NISA' Verse – 147**

**BE GRATEFUL TO GOD**

**TEXT**

"What can God gain  
By your punishment,  
If ye are grateful  
And ye believe.  
Nay, it is God  
That recogniseth  
(All good) and knoweth  
All things."

**COMMENTARY**

For every minor lapse or fault the religious zealots condemn people to hell - and Islamic scholars are no exception - may take particular note of this verse. See what the Holy Qur'an says on this trend:

"Why should God punish you?" if ye are grateful? "This means that God is not cruel, He is the Most Merciful Forgiver and Sustainer. Those who are grateful to him - all will equally well deserve His Grace and Mercy.

What does it mean 'being grateful to Him'? Grateful for the life He has bestowed on us; He has given us loving parents to protect and care us through infancy to manhood; He has made this vast world and everything in it useful to us? Can we count the blessings He has showered on us? Is it not our duty to remain grateful to Him? If anyone helps us we show gratitude to him all our life and why then should we not offer our gratitude to God for the blessings He has so generously showered on us?

In what way shall we show our gratitude to God? By constantly remembering Him. The Holy Qur'an says:

"Allah's are the Excellent Names, therefore invoke Him therewith." (VII / 180)

He is the Omnipotent, Sovereign,

He is the True Sovereign, the Omnipotent, the Greater, the Merciful, the Sustainer, the Bestower,

"Your God is One God, there is no God save Him, The Compassionate, the Merciful."  
(11/163 AL - BAQARAH)

Show gratitude by living a life of virtue and righteousness observing the law of God, and this is the way we are to show our gratitude.

In social relations, salutation is an ordinary courtesy and the Muslims observe in their everyday life when replying to a friend's gesture after due salutation, "how do you do?" he replies: "By the Grace of God I am well." After meals, the Muslim says: "Gratitude to God, the Praiseworthy".  
\* "The prophet said, "Whoever praises and expresses gratitude to God after taking a morsel of food or taking a drop of water to quench his thirst, God bestows on him His bounty.

**(123)** The Commentators who explained this verse and the following verses (148, 149, 150, 151 and 152) have cited the following sayings of the Prophet:

"A Muslim should never curse another Muslim. However, if he is treated and subjected to violence, he may curse but it is best to keep patience and forgive."

(Ibn-e-Abbas)

"Once, Bibi Ayesha Lost something and she scolded the thief. The Prophet heard this and addressed her thus: "Don't scold, pray God that He may restore her thing that he/she had stolen."

(Abu Da'ud)

"If you forgive the one who has harmed you Allah will reward you. Allah is The Most Merciful and this quality in humans is very dear to Him."

(Abu Da'ud)

"Allah will reward those who ignore and overlook others' faults (and abuses)."

(Ibn-e- Kathir)

#### COMMANDED TO BELIEVE IN ALL PROPHETS:

**(124) 'NISA' Verse – 150.**

##### TEXT

"Those who deny Allah  
And His Messengers, and (those  
Who) wish to separate  
Allah from His Messengers  
Saying; "We believe in some  
But reject others."  
And (those who) wish  
to take a course midway "

##### COMMENTARY

The Holy Qur'an is affirming that Prophets were sent to all peoples, in all countries and in all ages to convey them the truth and preach righteousness and they all preached the same truth - belief in One God and righteous conduct, the two cardinal principles of Faith.

One who does not believe in all the Prophets is also an Unbeliever.

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\*Cited from 'Shah Wali Uliyullah' (Hujjatullah-ul-Baligha P/578)

## THE INEQUITIES OF THE JEWS:

### (125) Verse – 155

#### TEXT

"(They have incurred divine Displeasure); in that they Broke their Covenant; That they rejected the Signs Of Allah; that they slew The Messengers in defiance Of right; that they said, "Our hearts are the wrappings (Which preserve Allah's word; We need no more)" - hay, Allah had set the seal on their hearts For their blasphemy. And little is it they believe -"

#### COMMENTARY

A people accustomed to a fixed code of behaviour and belief howsoever wrong and, even after realizing it to be immoral or perverse, do not give up their practice and obstinately cling to it as a binding tradition. Their hearts are sealed and they will not listen and change. This has also been stated in Surah-2 (Baqra - 6 & 7):

- 6- "As to those who reject Faith, It is the same to them Whether thou warn them Or do not warn them; They will not believe."
- 7- "God hath set a seal On their hearts and on their hearing. And on their eyes is a veil; Great is the penalty they (incur)."

## JESUS CHRIST WAS NOT CRUCIFIED.

### (126) Verse - 157

#### TEXT

"That they said (in boast),  
"We killed Christ Jesus  
The son of Mary,  
The Messenger of Allah."  
But they killed him not,  
Nor Crucified him,  
But so it was made  
To appear to them,  
And those who differ  
Therein are full of doubts,  
With no (certain) knowledge,  
But only conjecture to follow,  
For of a surety They killed him not."

#### COMMENTARY

In Chapter - 3, Verse - 55 this subject has been dealt. After he was placed on the cross, Jesus said to have prayed, as mentioned in the Bible, "(Imploringly) he prayed; my father, why have you abandoned me."

In response to this prayer God promised that He would allow Jesus natural death. Jesus swooned on the cross and was entrusted to the care of one of his favourite disciples. Until this stage there is no difference in the versions.

However, there is difference in versions as to whether Jesus died on the cross or only swooned and recovered later. Some believe that Jesus died on the cross but 'resurrect' on the third day.

This topic has been already discussed in Note-67 Prof. J. Warschaner has discussed this episode in "The Historical Life of Jesus" He says:

"It should not surprise us to find the Gospel narratives of what happened after the death of Jesus in a state of bewildering confusion, disjointedness and mental contradiction."

The Holy Qur'an is referring to this particular incident affirming:

"That those who differ therein are full of doubts with no (certain) knowledge."

**(127)** Jews are boasting that they have killed Jesus on the Cross and one who that has died on the cross cannot be a Prophet. In the Old Testament, it has been stated, "that one who has been hanged died of a curse of god."

(Deut 21: 23)

And the Jews had been saying that Jesus met with a detestable death on the cross. The Holy Qur'an proclaims:

**158- TEXT**

"Nay, Allah raised him up  
Unto Himself; and Allah  
is exalted in Power, Wise."

**INEQUITY OF JEWS - DEVOURING INTEREST:**

**(128) 'NISA' Verse – 161**

**TEXT**

"That they took usury,  
Though they were forbidden;  
And that they devoured  
Mens subsistence wrongfully,  
- We have prepared for those  
Among them who reject Faith  
A grievous punishment"

**COMMENTARY:**

In the preceding Note - 56 it has been stated that interest has been prohibited according to the old Testament but the Jews have taken to the business of interest. The Holy Qur'an says that they are wrongfully cheating the people of their rightful earnings and is warning them of 'grievous punishment'. Christians in the West and in America have legalized this trade of Usury and the admonition of the Holy Qur'an applies to them equally well.



## **JESUS WAS ONLY A MESSENGER OF GOD - SAY NOT 'TRINITY'.**

**(129) (NISA' Verse - 171:**

### **TEXT**

"O people of the Book!  
Commit no excesses  
In your religion; nor say  
Of Allah aught but the truth.  
Christ Jesus the son of Mary  
Was (no more than)  
A Messenger of Allah  
And His word  
Which He bestowed on Mary  
And a spirit proceeding  
From Him; so believe  
In Allah and His Messengers  
Say not "Trinity"; desist.  
It will be better for you;  
For Allah is One God;  
Glory be to Him;  
(Far Exalted is He) above  
Having a son. To Him  
Belong all things in the heavens  
And on earth. And enough  
Is Allah as a disposer of affairs."

### **COMMENTARY**

All Christians in general (excepting Utilitarian's and our Sufis) believe that Jesus Christ is a god, that he is the son of god, that in the 'Trinity' each one of the three (Trinity) is a god eternal. See how typical is the Christian belief in Trinity is:

\*"The persons are different," the substance is one, each of these divine persons is uncreated, each is eternal, each Almighty, etc; and not three Gods or three Lords, but One Lord and One God. The Father is uncreated and unbegotten; the son uncreated but begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost uncreated but proceeding from the Father and the Son. And in this Trinity of divine person there is none before and none after, none higher and none less, but all three co-equal."

### **TRINITY:**

"But now to come to the doctrine itself, and its basis in Holy Scripture. You are all aware that no such sentence as God is a 'triune God' is to be found in the Bible. The well known text (I.John, V.7.) 'There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one, 'is universally recognized as an interpolation'. The terms Trinity, triunity, threefold personality, and even the word person itself, are not derived immediately from Scripture." (T.Christlieb, "Modern Doubt and Christian Belief" p/243)

Well-known Christian scholars, of Biblical literature:-

Schenkrl : "Sketch of Character of Jesus"

Strause : "Life of Christ"

Henan : "Life of Christ"

Say that the 'New Testament' affirms that Jesus Christ was a human being, that the belief in 'Trinity' is a fiction, the doctrine itself is preposterous and that the doctrine is an offshoot of the idolatrous beliefs and practices prevailing in those days. The notion of adoring the memory of great men after their death as persons incarnate is prevalent in all countries of the ancient world and it is a well-known fact that great men like Sri Rama, Sri Krishna and Buddha are venerated and worshipped as the incarnation of god in the sub-continent although these great persons themselves had never stated in their lifetime that they are gods-incarnate. Mythology has developed round these personages confounding the truth they propagated. Polytheism is the product of mythology.

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\* Theodore Christlieb. "Modern Doubt and Christian Belief" P/211.

One thing that deserves our attention is that those who worship a multitude of gods and their idols do not themselves believe in the plurality of gods and affirm that God is One but still persist in their custom. There is a reason for this affirmation of the ONENESS of God because their practice is far from truth and militates against reason. If one accepts the belief in God (and is not an atheist) only Monotheism emerges as the supreme Truth. It is surprising indeed that Christians should adopt the doctrine of 'Trinity' which is not mentioned in the Holy Bible. To prefer superstitious or false belief over the plain and simple Truth cannot be possible unless our perception itself is faulty. Now, gone are the days when atheism was the fashion and religion treated as magic. Religion must satisfy the spiritual urges and longings and at the same time agree with the secrets of the phenomenon of nature being unraveled by science in every field of human endeavour and be compatible with our spiritual aspirations. That is possible only when our religion is founded on the solid basis of belief in One God.

"Jesus Christ prayed imploringly to God. How then do ye worship Jesus as a god?" Questions the Holy Qur'an. The Angels - the divine spirits, worship God. In this context we may look into the Bible itself:-

"And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

"And he cometh unto his disciples, and findeth them asleep, and sayeth unto Peter, what, could ye not watch with me one hour?"

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

"He went away again, the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, They Will be done."

"And he came and found them asleep again; for their eyes were heavy."

"And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words."

\* (Matthew, XXVI 39 - 44)

"And sayeth unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: Carry ye here, and watch."

"And went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him."

(Mark, XIV, 34 - 35)

As stated in Matthew that Jesus prostrated and prayed thrice, Gospel of John also describes in likeway (V-30, VI-38) In 'Luke' it is described thus:-

"And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."

(Luke, XXII - 44)

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\* Gospel of Matthew, Chap: 26, 39 - 44.

....."The Athanasius Creed is evidently too stiffly arithmetical in some of its definitions and anti-thesis, without any attempt to reconcile their obvious contradictions. Thus each divine person is said to be eternal, each uncreated etc. and yet there are not three uncreated and three eternal, but one uncreated and one Eternal etc. To these statements the objection is obvious that they destroy the Unity for the sake of Trinity, or the Trinity in the interests of Unity; nor is it quite easy with the doctrine so stated to rebut the charge alleged, not by Jews and Mohammedans only, but also by many Christians that 'Trinitarians' contradicts the fundamental article of all true religion, that there is one Living and True God."

A question arises in this context: Is the doctrine of 'Trinity' embodied in the Bible? If not, by whom and at what period. To answer these questions one must understand that the duration of the Prophetic mission of Jesus Christ did not exceed a year; and some say, it lasted for three years, - nothing certain. During his Prophetic mission there were just about twelve disciples in attendance and none of them were literate and there were none who could commit the precepts of Jesus in writing in the language he spoke. None of the Gospels now extant constituting the New Testament' was compiled by any of his living disciples. Long after the death of Jesus, - a period of time ranging from eighty to one hundred thirty years, at different times and in different languages not spoken by Jesus, were collected and committed to writing. Discussion on this topic appears in the preceding Note.

The religion of Jesus Christ now being propagated by the Church is not the religion revealed by God to Jesus Christ, and not even that which had been preached by Jesus and his disciples who remained in attendance on him. In fact, Christianity had been established by St. Paul, - a fact which has been acknowledged by the Christian Church. St. Paul himself had never seen Jesus. He claimed that the 'Epistles' were communicated to him in visions by Jesus. An eminent Biblical scholar, H.R. Mackintosh, 'The Doctrine of the person of Jesus Christ' (P/51) observes:-

"The Christ of the Pauline Epistles therefore has no relation at all to the historic Jesus. We need scarcely hesitate to regard St. Paul, indeed, as the real founder of our religion."

It was St. Paul who established the great Institution of the Church of Rome, to serve as the foundation of the Christian Faith.

When Jesus was mounted on the cross the manner he prayed has been described in Matthew and Mark thus:-

"And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, Lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

(Matthew XXVII. 46)

(Also Luke, XV.34)

When Jesus himself prayed with so much humility as stated in the Bible how is it that this great devotee is in turn worshipped as a god asks the Holy Qur'an.

## **CHAPTER - V**



"In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful."

### **`MA'IDA' OR ('THE TABLE SPREAD')**

**(REVEALED AT MADINAH)**

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

`Al Ma'ida': means: 'Table Spread' - Food and provision. This Chapter takes its name from verse - 112.

#### **TEXT**

"Behold! the disciples said : O Jesus the  
son of Mary  
Can thy Lord send down to us A Table set  
(with provisions)  
From heaven "Said Jesus: Fear Allah, if you  
have faith."

Verse – 3- A part of this Chapter was revealed on the occasion of the Prophet's last pilgrimage to Ka'bah in II Hijri. By that time the entire peninsula of Arabia had embraced Islam and the Prophet's mission was fulfilled.

#### **TEXT**

"This day have I perfected your religion  
For you, completed my favour upon  
you And have chosen for you Islam as  
your religion."

#### **COMMENTARY**

This verse constitutes the crowning glory of the successful conclusion of his 'Apostolic Mission'.

Please see: "APPENDIX 'A'" for full TEXT of the 'LAST SERMON' and an account of the 'Farewell pilgrimage'.

(131) / Verse - 1.

#### **TEXT**

"O ye who believe!  
Fulfill (all) obligations.  
Lawful unto you (for food)  
Are all four-footed animals,  
With the exceptions named:  
But animals of the chase  
Are forbidden while ye  
Are in the sacred precincts  
Or in pilgrim garb  
For Allah doth command  
According to His Will and Plan"

#### **COMMENTARY**

The word 'Aqud' (Obligations) used in the verse means: contracts, treaties, promises and pledges and settlements arrived at between two parties.

## FOODS FORBIDDEN

(132) / Verse - 3:

### TEXT

"Forbidden to you (for food)  
Are: dead meat, blood,  
The flesh of swine, and that  
On which hath been invoked  
The name of other than Allah;  
That which hath been  
Killed by Strangling,  
Or by a violent blow,  
Or by a headlong fall,  
Or by being gored to death;  
That which hath been (partly)  
Eaten by a wild animal;  
Unless ye are able  
To slaughter it (in form)  
That which is sacrificed  
On stone (altars)  
(Forbidden) also is the division  
(Of meat) by raffling  
With arrows; that is impiety.  
This day have those who  
Reject Faith given up  
All hope of your religion;  
Yet fear them not  
But fear me.

### TEXT

(133) \*<sup>1</sup>"This day have I

Perfected your religion  
For you, completed  
My favour upon you,

\*<sup>2</sup>And have chosen for you

Islam as your religion  
But if any is forced  
By hunger, with no inclination"

(134) To transgression, Allah is  
Indeed Oft-Forgiving,  
Most Merciful"

### COMMENTARY

Consumption of meat of animal 'dead' by itself is forbidden. Such meat is forbidden by the Aryans also and according to 'Gautama Dharma Sutra.

In the Aryan religion 'Swine' is regarded as the 'most impure' animal. 'The very smell of swine' renders food polluted and impure says Manu (III. 241) In yet another context, Manu says, that the Brahmin who consumes the meat of swine becomes himself impure (see V.19).

The Holy Qur'an has forbidden the meat of animal which is killed by a wild animal or partly eaten by it. 1011 The Aryan Law givers (Gautama Dharma sutra) have made such meat permissible. Manu agrees with this view. Manu holds the consumption of meat of animal killed by the hunting dog is pure.

### COMMENTARY

Aryan law givers have also permitted such exceptions.

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\*<sup>1</sup> This is the last revelation. 82 days after the revelation of this the Prophet left for his heavenly abode.

\*<sup>2</sup> Meaning of the word 'islam' has been elaborated at Note - 140.

**(135) V: 'MA'IDA'**

**Verse - 4:**

**TEXT**

"They ask thee what is  
Lawful to them (as food),  
Say ! Lawful unto you  
Are (all) things good and pure;  
And what ye have taught

\* Your trained hunting animals  
(To catch) in the manner  
Directed to you by Allah;  
Eat what they catch for you,  
But pronounce the name  
Of Allah over it, and fear  
Allah; for Allah is swift  
In taking account"

**COMMENTARY**

The Believers are instructed to first  
pronounce the name of Allah.

**(136) V: (MA'IDA'**

**Verse - 5:**

**TEXT**

"This day are (all) things  
Good and pure made lawful  
Unto you. The food  
Of the people of the Book  
Is lawful unto you  
And yours is lawful  
Unto them.  
(Lawful unto you in marriage)  
Are (not only) chaste women  
Who are believers, but  
Chaste Women among  
The people of the Book  
Revealed before your time, -  
When ye give them  
Their due dowers, and desire  
Chastity, not lewdness,  
If any one rejects faith,  
Fruitless in his work,  
And in the Hereafter  
He will be in the ranks  
Of those who have lost  
(All spiritual good)

**COMMENTARY**

"The word "The people of the Book"  
occurring in this verse indicates: 'Jews and  
Christians' - people to whom Book has been  
sent."

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\* Manu, the Aryan law giver also considers such quarry (meat) pure for consumption.

**(137) Verse - 6:**

**TEXT**

"O Ye who believe!  
When ye prepare  
For prayer, wash  
Your faces and your hands  
(And arms) to the elbows;  
Rub your heads (with water);  
And (wash) your feet  
To the ankles,  
If ye are in a state  
Of ceremonial impurity,  
Bathe your whole body.  
But if ye are ill,  
Or on a journey,  
Or one of you cometh  
From offices of nature,  
Or ye have been  
In contact with women,  
And ye find no water  
Then take for yourselves  
Clean sand or earth  
And rub therewith  
Your faces and hands.  
Allah doth not wish  
To place you in a difficulty  
But to make you clean  
And to complete  
His favour to you  
That ye may be grateful."

**COMMENTARY**

When clean water is not available one may purify himself by rubbing with clean sand or earth. Aryan law givers also ordained this manner of purification.

**(137) Verse - 8:**

**TEXT**

"O ye who believe!  
Stand out firmly  
For Allah, as witnesses  
To fair dealing, and let not  
The hatred of others  
To you make you swerve,  
To wrong and depart from  
Justice. Be just: that is  
Next to piety: and fear Allah,  
For Allah is well-acquainted  
With all that ye do."

**COMMENTARY**

The Believers are urged to stand firmly for justice and be impartial and settle disputes in spite of your rancor or enmity with them. Justice is piety and Muslims must stand firm on the party which is right. This is another instance of the universal code of justice propounded by Islam.

**(138) SURAHH - V: 'MA'IDA'**

**Verse - 13:**

**TEXT**

"But because of their breach  
Of their Covenant, We  
Cursed them, and made  
Their hearts grow hard  
They change the words  
From their right places  
And forget a good part  
Of the Message that was  
Sent them, nor wilt thou  
Cease to find them  
Barring a few – ever  
Bent on (new) deceits;  
But forgive them and overlook  
(Their misdeeds); for Allah  
Loveth those who are kind."

**COMMENTARY**

The Jews had been distorting and introducing interpolations in the Book bestowed on Prophet Moses and behaving in a manner that is wicked and aggressive. The Holy Qur'an is advising the Prophet to be tolerant and considerate to them. Tolerance is the key note of the teachings of the Holy Qur'an. The Prophet is commanded to forgive them for 'Allah loveth those who are kind.'

**(139) V: 'MA'IDA'**

**Verse – 15    PERSPICUOUS BOOKS - ISLAM:**

**TEXT**

"O People of the Book!  
There hath come to you  
Our Apostle, revealing  
To you much that ye  
Used to hide in the Book,  
And passing over much  
(That is now unnecessary)."  
There hath come to you  
From Allah a (New) light  
And a perspicuous Book"

**COMMENTARY**

The religion expounded by Islam has two basic doctrines as the foundations of its universalism: One : That God is One, Immanent, Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Sustainer, Unbegotten and the Most Merciful, is beyond perception and comprehension by human vision and senses and; Two, Human conduct: True in thought, word and deed. Islam has no concern with the minor details of life, such as language, dress, customs relating to social codes and etiquette which are all dependent on climatic and geographical conditions.

In this context, it is significant to note that Muslim societies everywhere are based on the concept of Oneness of God, and any custom or usage repugnant to their basic doctrine and brotherhood are shunned. In every country they inhabit, Muslims necessarily adopted the local language, dress, and food. There is a lot of difference between an Indian Muslim and an Egyptian Muslim in their language and attire, customs and habits but on the spiritual side - in salutation, and social etiquette, in the mosque and the religious gathering cultural unity is very much in common reflective of their common cultural and spiritual traits proclaiming their unity in keeping with the spiritual, moral and ethical teachings of Islam.

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## ABEL AND CAIN:

### (140) V: 'MA'IDA

#### Verse - 2:

##### TEXT

"Recite to them the truth  
Of the story of the two sons  
Of Adam. Behold! they each  
Presented a sacrifice (to Allah)  
It was accepted from one,  
But not from the other.  
Said the latter: "Be sure  
I will slay thee. "Surely",  
Said the former. "Allah  
Doth accept of the sacrifice  
Of those who are the righteous.

##### COMMENTARY

In the Bible - Genesis (4:3:12) this Chapter is narrated as an illustration. There is the episode of the two sons of Adam: One was righteous and the other wicked. One decided to kill while the other, - the righteous one, refused to raise his hand first but the one who was the righteous became a victim of the wicked one. This was the reason why it became necessary to promulgate laws for the punishment of the wicked and the errant for the protection of the righteous and the peaceful. In this section (5) are indicated laws prescribing

punishments to fortify the society against aggression and keep the transgressors under check and establish respect for law. The episode of the two brothers - Cain and Abel - is illustrated in this context. Thus a society came into being as their number multiplied. Administration of societies for maintaining of law and order and for the administration of justice to establish human relations on the basis of righteousness and equality are indicated.

\*\*\*\*\*

### (141) Verse - 33:

##### TEXT

"The punishment of those  
Who wage war against Allah  
And His Apostle, and strive  
With might and main  
For mischief through the land  
Is execution, or crucifixion  
Or the cutting off of hands  
And feet from opposite sides  
Or exile from the land;  
That is their disgrace  
In this world, and  
A heavy punishment is their's  
In the Hereafter."

##### COMMENTARY

The word 'Un fa oo minal ardh' has been interpreted to mean 'imprison' instead of 'exiled from land' by Abu Hanifa, Razi an Arabic lexicographer.

**(142) Verse - 38:**

**TEXT**

"As to the thief,  
Male or female,  
Cut off his or her hands  
A punishment by way  
Of example from Allah,  
For their crime !  
And Allah is Exalted in Power  
Full of Wisdom."

**COMMENTARY**

The Holy Qur'an has prescribed 'harsh' punishments for some crimes. The modern criminal code is not so harsh and the moderns consider these as abnormal. Where the Quranic laws are practised crime is at its lowest because of the deterrent punishment that is prescribed. For example, those who have personally seen bear witness to the fact that crimes like stealing, robbery, adultery are rare. In Mecca people leave their shops open and go to

mosque when they hear the call for prayers is a common sight. During the pilgrimage season lacs stet Faithful throng Mecca and shops containing valuable merchandise is left open but never touched by any one. In the tents which are open valuables are left without any guard yet, they are safe.

Law givers in every religion have prescribed equally harsh laws. Manu, the Hindu Law giver has prescribed the following punishment for stealing:

"Hands, legs, and other limbs with which the thief robbed must be cut off so that he may not commit the same crime."

(Manu VIII. 334)

"For the stealing of corns exceeding ten measures death is the least punishment."

Cutting off of hands, and in cases of theft of ornaments and precious stones, punishments; death, punishments like imprisonment, beating, hand cuffing and leg cuffing with iron chains are some other minor punishments imposed by Aryan law givers in their Dharmasastras.

**FEAR GOD ONLY:**

(143) / 44 One who fears only God will never be afraid of anyone else. Only such as those who fear One God will gain in courage of conviction and the moral courage and deserve the Grace of the Lord. For example he will not indulge in falsehood and will not lie. Is it not a fact that one lies out of fear? Fortitude and patience when confronted with a danger, moral courage and righteousness are qualities born out of faith in One God only.

Pantheism is born out of lack of Faith in One God. Elements of nature are personified into gods and goddesses and their aid is invoked whenever some pain or calamity afflicted and their idols worshipped and offerings made to propitiate. In his view there is some deity which sends this scourge and it must be propitiated to avert and heal. The common scourge is small pox which spreads quickly like an epidemic. In the Vedic times it was Indra and in the present times it is some local deity. See how 'Indra' is prayed in 'Rigved'

"Harm us not 'INDRA', abandon us not; deprive us not of the enjoyments that are dear to us; injure not, affluent SHAKRA, our unborn offspring; harm not those who are capable (only of crawling) on their knees."

(Rigved: 1:15:12 - 8.)

In India a multitude of diseases are said to have been excited by the female goddess - when afflicted with smallpox she is worshipped. All this is born out of ignorance and vain superstition. It is in this context of invoking the help of a multitude of gods and goddesses that the Holy Qur'an exhorts mankind to 'fear' god and place their trust wholly on the One God.

#### **V 'MA'IDA'**

**(144) Verse - 63**

**INTEREST:**

##### **TEXT**

"Why do not the Rabbis  
And the doctors of law forbid  
Them from their (habit  
Of) uttering sinful words  
And eating things forbidden?  
Evil indeed is their works."

##### **COMMENTARY**

Addressing the Jews, Christians and other religious devines and doctors the Holy Qur'an is asking why do they lie and ask people to desist from devouring ill-gotten fortunes accumulated through interest?

Here is an instance: The religion of the Jews, the religion of the Christians, the religion of the Aryans/Hinduism - unanimously proclaim prohibition of 'interest'. But at present, Jews, Christians and in India, interest has become the foundation of economy. When constructing a house they will calculate the amount of interest that would accrue in case the amount is invested instead of utilizing on the construction. Why don't the Christian Missionaries, the missionaries of Arya Samaj and numerous other religious denominations do not ask their followers to desist from taking interest in defiance of their religious law? All Dharmasastras are unanimously against charging of interest yet Indian religious leaders are accepting donations from the rich marwari traders and financial institutions thriving on interest. Is it not a fact that the enormous amount of donations received by the Christian Mission is derived from business houses prospering on interest? The Holy Qur'an is pointedly asking this same question. Within our memory there appears no reformer or religious leader asking for a ban on interest or preaching against interest.

**(145) Verse – 66**

##### **TEXT**

"If only they had stood fast By  
the Law, the Gospel,  
And all the revelation  
that was sent,  
To them from their Lord,  
They would have enjoyed  
Happiness from every side  
There is from among them  
A party on the right course;  
But many of them  
Follow a course that is evil."

##### **COMMENTARY**

The Holy Qur'an is proclaiming that the Jews and the Christians would have been worthy of the Grace of God if only they had followed their religion and lived a blissful life according to the tenets of their religion as revealed in the Books bestowed on them but they followed the course of evil. Look at the breadth of vision of the Holy Qur'an and the extent of the toleration it has preached;- it would have been enough if they had followed their Books with devotion (and if everyone had followed the teachings preached to them by the Prophets ordained -(See Verse – 48 V- Ma'ida) and that was enough.

Why was the Holy Qur'an revealed in Arabic (language) and to the Prophet Muhammad? Prophet Muhammad is in the long line of the Biblical Prophets descended from the Prophet Abraham the ancestor of Jews and the enlightened Truth and ideal of the message is the same which was revealed to all the Prophets ordained to different nations at different ages for the emancipation of mankind.

**TEXT**

"They do blaspheme who say:  
"Allah is Christ the son  
Of Mary,". But said Christ:  
O Children of Israel!  
Worship Allah, my Lord  
And your Lord. "Whoever  
Joins other gods with Allah,-  
Allah will forbid him  
The Garden, and the Fire  
Will be his abode. There will  
For the wrong doers  
Be no one to help."

72- "They do blaspheme who say:  
Allah is one of three  
In a Trinity: for there is  
No god except One Allah.  
If they desist not  
From their word (of blasphemy),  
Verily a grievous penalty  
Will befall the blasphemers  
Among them."

**COMMENTARY**

The words spoken by Jesus Christ are thus  
recorded in the Bible:-

"So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the  
Son of Man, then you will realize that I am  
he and that I do nothing of my own accord  
but tell things just as the Father has taught  
me"

**MATTHEW: IV: 10:**

"Begone, Satan; for it is written:  
Thou shalt worship the Lord your God,  
and Him only shalt thou serve."

XIX.17: "There is none good but one, that  
is God."

XXVI: "My God, my God, why hast Thou  
forsaken me?"

Thus prayed Jesus when he was mounted on the cross.

**MARK: (12; - 29)**

"Hear O Israel: The Lord, our God  
is one Lord. And you shall love the  
Lord with your whole heart, with  
whole soul, with your whole mind  
and with your whole strength."

(147) It was St. Paul who introduced the belief among Christians that god is 'triune' and that Jesus is one of the three. This has been discussed at N/67.

(148) Islam is not concerned with matters trivial and recognizes all works which are right to us. Islam does not preach exclusion or arrogation against followers of other religions and creeds. It is a historical fact that in the Muslim peoples kingdoms non-Muslims enjoyed favours in recognition of their merit. It is a historical fact that the Commanders-in-Chief of the Lodi dynasty was a Hindu. In Deccan (in the present day Andhra Pradesh), Akkana and Madana were ministers of the the Muslim kings of Golconda, enjoying complete confidence. The Mughal emperors appointed Hindus to the highest positions in State and there were Hindu generals to command the Mughal armies.

**V 'MA'IDA'**

**(149) Verse - 103:**

**TEXT**

"It was not Allah  
Who instituted (superstitions  
Like those of) a slit ear  
She-camel, or a she-camel  
Let loose for free pasture,  
Or idol sacrifices for  
Twin-births in animals,  
Or stallion-camels  
Freed from work  
It is blasphemers  
Who invent a lie  
Against Allah; but most  
Of them lack wisdom"

**COMMENTARY**

This sort of pagan custom prevailed among Arabs and this superstition is also prevalent in India. Such superstitions are not ordained by God and those who are imputing these to God are Tiers. In India bulls are branded and dedicated to some deity and left free to roam about. There is no permission of such practice even in any of the Dharma sutras of the Hindus. To indulge in this superstition is ignorance says the Holy Qur'an.

**MIRACLES PERFORMED BY JESUS CHRIST.**

**(150) Verse - 110.**

**TEXT**

"Then will Allah say,  
'O Jesus the son of Mary!  
Recount my favour  
To thee and to thy mother  
Behold ! I strengthened thee  
With the holy spirit,  
So that thou didst speak  
To the people in childhood  
And in maturity.  
Behold! I taught thee  
The Book and Wisdom,  
The Law and the Gospel  
And Behold ! thou makest  
Out of clay, as it were,  
The figure of a bird,  
By my leave,  
And thou breathest into it,  
And it becometh a bird  
By my leave,  
And behold! I did  
Restrain the children of Israel  
From (violence to) thee  
When thou didst show them  
The clear Signs  
And the unbelievers among them  
Said: 'This is nothing  
But evident magic"

**COMMENTARY**

**These are some of the miracles performed by Jesus Christ with the permission of God and these are narrated in the Bible as well**



"In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful."

### **AN'AM' (THE CATTLE)**

There are references to superstitions and pagan beliefs associated with cattle, cows, camels, bulls, rams and goats, - the practice of slitting the ears of she camels and dedicating them to some deities for sacrifice and leaving them free to roam about. This SURAH' takes its name from 'Slitting the ears of she camels' a superstitious practice prevalent in Arabs stet and the ancient people. Unless these superstitions are destroyed the doctrine of the ONENESS of God cannot take root, - doctrine which is the base and guiding principle of the spiritual and material life of mankind.

#### **VI (153) - 'ANA'M' Verse - 11**

##### **TEXT**

"Say "Travel through the earth  
And see what was the end  
Of those who rejected Truth"

##### **COMMENTARY**

It is this directive that spurred the zeal of the Arab scientists to enquire and investigate into the story of the people who lived and perished in days bygone and hast thus laid the foundation of the science of archaeology and Sociology. A western scholar writes:-

"We must not be surprised to find the Qur'an regarded as the fountain-head of all the sciences. Every subject connected with heaven or earth, human life, commerce and various trades are occasionally touched upon, and this gave rise to the production of numerous monographs forming commentaries on parts of the Holy Book. In this way the Qur'an was responsible for great discussions, and to it was also indirectly due the marvelous development of all branches of sciences in the Muslim world. This again not only affected the Arabs but also inducted Jewish philosophers to treat metaphysical and religious questions after Arab methods."

(Herschfield, New Researches, P/9)

#### **ANIMAL LIFE:**

#### **(155) VI - (ANA'M') Verse - 38**

##### **TEXT**

"There is not an animal  
(That lives) on the earth,  
Nor a being that flies  
On its wings, but forms  
Part of) communities like you.  
Nothing have We omitted  
From the Book, and they (all)  
Shall be gathered to their Lord  
In the end"

##### **COMMENTARY**

Until recently all biologists believed that animals lived independently in constant fear and struggle for survival. On the contrary, the Holy Qur'an has stated without any ambiguity that it is not so, and that they live in communities very much like humans.

Very recently a great biologist and social scientist, Prince Peter Kropotkin has observed thus:-

"They (the scientists) came to conceive the animal worlds as a world of perpetual struggle among half-starved individuals, thirsting for one another's blood." (P/23)

In his work "Mutual Aid" he has described the collective life in the Animal World and how they live in well organized communities. Elsewhere he has observed thus: "All these mammals live in societies and nations sometimes numbering hundreds and thousands of individuals." (P/48 *ibid*) "Life in societies is no exception in the animal world; it is the rule, the Law of Nature, and it reaches the fullest development with the higher vertebrates."

Now the same patterns have been observed in the life of birds, - parrots. "Except in the pairing season, they live in very numerous societies or bands. "About some other birds, Mox Perly writes: "In South America they gather in blocks of from forty to fifty thousand individuals. Part of which enjoy sleep while the others keep watch, and other go again fishing."

Until recently, the scientists believed that animals and birds are mechanical in intelligence and have no discretionary faculty and have no sense of pain and pleasure. On the contrary, the Holy Qur'an says that all these qualities are embedded in animals life too and they too are liable to answer on the Day of Judgement. Biologists are now coming to believe on the basis of extensive observations the truth of the revelations of the Holy Qur'an in this context.

I commend the readers to read "Essays of a Biologist" by Julian Huxely. In his essay on "An Essay on Biped - Mind" he has described the animal mind.

#### **EQUALITY:**

##### **(156) Verse - 52**

###### **TEXT**

"Send not away those  
Who call on their Lord  
Morning and evening,  
Seeking His Face  
In naught art thou accountable  
For them, and in naught are they  
Accountable for thee,  
That thou shouldst turn  
Them away, and thus be  
(One) of the unjust"

###### **COMMENTARY**

Among the disciples of the Prophet Muhammad were some very poor, some slaves and some Abyssinian Negroes. They did not have any place in the Arab society. After they had embraced Islam they used to spend most of their time in the company of the Prophet. Some of the disciples who were rich and enjoyed high status among the Arabs disliked sitting in the company of the Prophet without any place of honour for them except as equals, and considered it below their dignity. They presented their case to the Prophet saying that this situation is a humiliation to them and therefore, the people of inferior status be asked to leave and make way for the gentlemen. To this, the Prophet replied that God does not look at faces but at righteous deeds and right thoughts and the best in His eyes are those who excel in piety and righteousness.



In the brotherhood of Islam race, family, lineage and colour do not carry any weight. Whoever fears God most, whoever is righteous in conduct and is amiable is really the great man and is the most honoured in the eyes of God and that is the criterion. Not riches, nor race nor lineage. The very concept of high and low are alien to the spirit of Islam.

No other religion has accorded such equality; no social law has accorded such dignity. In our country race and caste is the dominant factor for determining the respectability of any individual. Anyone who sits as an equal with a Brahmin should be punished by cutting off his hips. A sudra, however righteous, cannot claim equality with a Brahmin however wicked he may be. In the preceding chapters a few instances have been cited of this gross inequality preached by Dharmasastras. While the ancient religions are so harsh on those who do not belong by birth to a high-caste, -Brahmin, the modern practise is equally vile and intolerant in affairs relating to race and colour. Even in this age of people's sovereignty, equality and fraternity are mere slogans and have not been accepted as a doctrine even in America and Europe. In a book published in 1941, authored by William Dwight Whitney: Who are the Americans?" says the author:-

"We may leave the thought of Fraternity with merely a note that it seems never to be referred to as an ideal in either England or America. What of Liberty and Equality? Until the English revolution that commenced in 1641 - 42 the Englishman rarely paid lip-service to the principle of equality"

It is the same story in America. As a result of the civil war slavery was abolished but even to-day the condition of the Negro is worse than that of a slave. There is no parallel to their distress. The idea that the Nordic race is superior to any other race is prevalent in Germany, that the white races are far superior to the Black races is the dominant idea prevalent in America and Europe. In Japan, there is the belief that they are the progeny of Sun and the Chinese think that they are the most civilized and superior people in the world and the Brahmins in India believe that they were born from the mouth of Brahma is a belief strongly embedded in the religious belief of Hindus. The Brahmin claims divinity by birth.

A Western scholar, F.H. Giddings, "Studies in the Theory of Human Society" writes: that if the doctrine of complete equality of mankind is not accepted downfall of mankind is inevitable. In the Conference held in Versailles in 1919 the representative of the Government of Japan proposed that a declaration be made affirming that 'All the races are equal'. President Wilson who presided over the Conference refused.

In America today the black people are condemned to the same status as was accorded to Sudras in ancient India.

In ancient times Aryans were the superior race and now in America it is the 'White men' that are the superior race. In public transport Negroes have segregated seats; in hotels and restaurants their admission is altogether banned or restricted. They have separate schools and colleges. Even in the matter of justice there is discrimination. In the Labour Unions they are denied representation. In post offices and other public dealing offices they have separate counters.

This was the state of affairs before the second great war.



Now think over the concept of 'equality and fraternity' propounded by Islam 1500 years ago and which forms the living principle of Muslim social conduct throughout the world. The Muslim concept of fraternity and equality is not exclusively limited to Muslim brotherhood only but transcends this barrier too to include within its fold the entire mankind without discrimination as the progeny of one common parentage - Adam and Eve. The differences of high and low, black and white, race and religion hold no bar in the Muslim view of universal fraternity. It is so strongly embedded in the Muslim psyche that this fact has been highlighted by the Christian Missionaries even in their Conferences. Dr. Snoker Hoar Gronge, a prominent Christian Missionary scholar observed:-

\*<sup>1</sup>"The Koran teaches the descent of man from Adam and Eve, implying the equality of all men, notwithstanding the variety of the characteristics of individuals and groups. The actual multiplicity of languages and colours is described in the Koran, next to the creation of Heaven and earth, as one of the magnificent Signs of Allah's Wisdom. The Prophet of Arabia ..... enforced the universal recognition of the principle of equality "

Another Christian intellectual, E.E. Long, in his address to the International Divine Knowledge Conference, held in Paris, observed:-

\*<sup>2</sup>"A Christian convert is not regarded as a social equal, but the Muslim brotherhood is a reality."

The Law propounded by Islam may become the foundation of the present civilization and the day our society refuses to adopt this concept with heart and soul may as well cause the downfall of the present civilization.

He observed: "A unfaltering and unquenchable faith in equality in the hope of peace and harmony the spring of progress and the soul of civilization." (ibid P/93.)

### **TREASURE POUCH OF KNOWLEDGE (Kita bim Mubin)**

#### **(157) Verse - 59**

##### **TEXT**

"With Him are the keys  
Of the Unseen, the treasures  
That none knoweth but He. He  
knoweth whatever there is On  
the earth or in the sea  
Not a leaf doth fall  
But with His knowledge:  
There is not a grain  
In the darkness (or depths  
Of the earth, nor anything  
Fresh or dry (green or withered)  
But is (inscribed) in a Record  
Clear (to those who can read).

##### **COMMENTARY**

The basis of the use of the word 'pouch of knowledge' is the word 'Kitabim Mubeen' occurring in this verse. This is translated as 'Enlightened Book' in which everything is made clear embracing the past, present and the future.

And this is evident to us in the unfailing order in the Law of Nature. An eminent scientist of our day, Sir James Jeans, has observed:

\*<sup>3</sup>"In brief, the act of creation had created not only the universe but its whole future history."

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\*<sup>1</sup> In a volume entitled "The Muslim World of To-day" edited by Gohn R. Mott, Chairman, International Missionary Council, P/82.

\*<sup>2</sup> Ibid P/82.

\*<sup>3</sup> Sir James Jeans, "The Mysterious Universe" P/27.

## PROPHET ABRAHAM A MODEL OF SELF-SURRENDER:

### (158) VI (AN'AM ) Verse-78

#### TEXT

"When he saw the sun  
Rising in splendor  
He said: "This is my Lord:  
This is the greatest (of all)  
But when the sun set,  
He said: "O my people! I  
am indeed free  
From your (guilt)  
Of giving partners to Allah"

#### COMMENTARY

Prophet Abraham is the forefather of the Jews. He lived during the period 4,000 to 3,000 B.C. among the Chaldeans - (Palestine of those times was a part of the modern day Syria. The people among whom he was born were worshiping a multitude of gods, and idol worshippers. Prophet Abraham was a thinker and used his intellect and discretion and he contemplated over the mysteries of creation around him not in the manner of

one bound to custom but as one who was inspired by an inquisitive mind of the one who feared God and delving into the mysteries of creation and nature around him. In the rising of the sun inspiring surprise and adoration, in the resplendent appearance of the moon and its star spangled sky filling one's mind with joy and wonder but they soon set but these left on him the impression of beauty and unfailing order and rhythm. He proclaimed to his people, love not who set' sun, moon and the stars.

#### TEXT

77- "When he saw the moon  
Rising in splendour,  
He said, "This is my Lord."  
But when the moon set,  
He said, : Unless my Lord  
Guide me, I shall surely  
Be among those  
Who go astray."

#### COMMENTARY

In a similar manner the Vedic Rishi pronounces:

"To what god shall we offer our oblation other than the one god Who created the world and the firmament above established firmly without support and stored waters therein. To Him shall I worship" (Rig Ved.X)

79- "For me, I have set  
My face, firmly and truly  
Towards Him Who created  
The heavens and the earth,  
And never shall I give  
Partners to Allah"

But Abraham's people rejected and Abraham was expelled as one who had forsaken their gods. He left the land in disgust. In the beginning, the Aryan religion started as a polytheistic creed but ultimately, evolving into a monotheistic creed as Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

stated, it could not hold and gave way to new religion and new gods and the Vedic religion faded out. New modes of worship, new customs became the tradition. Presently, it is the Puranas which command reverence and attention. The Aryan society has thus lost the inspirational lead given by the Rishies and lost its way.

### (159) VI- AN'AM' Verse – 87

#### TEXT

"(To them) and to their fathers  
And progeny and brother;  
We chose them,  
And We guided them  
To a straight way"

#### COMMENTARY

The monotheistic creed preached by the Prophet Abraham did not cease with him but continued and a whole line of Prophets ordained by God to different people at different times. In this context some Biblical Prophets Noah, David, Moses and Jesus are named.

**(160) Verse - 145\_**

**TEXT**

"Say: "I find not  
In the Message received  
By me by inspiration  
Any (Meat) forbidden  
To be eaten by one  
Who wishes to eat it  
Unless it be dead meat  
Or blood poured forth,  
Or the flesh of swine  
For it is an abomination –  
Or, what is impious, (meat)  
On which a name has been  
Invoked, other than Allah's"  
But (Even so), if a person  
Is forced by necessity,  
Without willful disobedience,  
Nor transgressing due limits,-  
Thy Lord is Oft-Forgiving,  
Most Merciful"

**COMMENTARY**

In all revealed religions the basic truth is one, without ambiguity, but a professional priesthood entrenched, brought about interpolations and invention of tales woven as mythologies lending them sanctity and reverence to misguide and mislead the people. In India there are the Puranas (mythologies) to which divinity is ascribed through a presiding divinity - god, (and there are as many as ninety nine 'PURANAS') commanding reverence. A myth has been created that salvation is not possible without the active participation of the priesthood in all religious ceremonies from the cradle to the grave. Priesthood is the most profitable and the most honourable profession and a profession exclusively dominated by the high cast Brahmin who claims divinity by birth commanding reverence and worshipful status before whom even the ruling kings and monarchs must bow. Is not all this a false imputation against God.

**(155) Verse – 145**

The Aryan scriptures have also forbidden for food animals/beasts having five claws; See Manu V - 47.



"In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful."

**`AR'AF' (HEIGHTS):**

The Prophet who is unlettered

**SECTION – 20**

**(156) Verse – 158**

**TEXT**

"Say: "O men! I am sent  
Unto you all, as the Messenger  
Of Allah, to Whom belongeth  
The Dominion of the heavens  
And the earth: there is no god  
But He: it is He that giveth  
Both life and death So believe  
In Allah and His Messenger,  
The unlettered Prophet,  
Who believeth in Allah  
And His words: follow Him  
That (so) ye may be guided"

**COMMENTARY**

In the Arabic text the word: 'UMMI' is used. Full meaning of this word is: 'unlettered' - one who knows not how to read and write As a matter of fact the Arabs as a people were almost unlettered and bereft of learning and intellect, a desert land far from civilization. The Prophet Muhammad, born and brought up among such a people, himself unlettered, should preach such a universal religion of lofty ideals and transform the Arabs into the most civilized race and harbingers of a world Civilization and culture is a witness manifest attesting the truth of Islam as a revealed religion. Is this not a good enough witness attesting the greatness of Islam as a world religion?

**(157) VI 'AR'AF' Verse – 158**

**TEXT**

"O men! I am sent  
Unto you all, as the Apostle  
Of Allah, to Whom belongeth  
The dominion of the heavens  
And the earth: there is no god  
But He; it is He that giveth  
Both life and death. So believe  
In Allah and His Apostle  
The unlettered Prophet,  
Who believeth in Allah  
And His Words: follow him  
That (so) ye may be guided"

**COMMENTARY**

See: How clear and straightforward is the message of the Holy Qur'an: Allah is The Lord of the dominion of the earth and heaven and he it is who gives life and death and so believe in Him.

**(158) VII- AR'AF' Verse - 167**

**TEXT**

"Behold ! thy Lord did declare  
That He would send  
Against them, to the Day  
Of judgement, those who would  
Afflict them with grievous  
Penalty. Thy Lord is quick  
In retribution; but He is also  
Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful"

**COMMENTARY**

In accordance with this prophecy the  
Jews are still under curse, hated, living  
precariously. They will be (and have been)  
under the domination of a race which treats  
them as mean out-castes. They suffered  
much under the iron heels of Nazi rule in  
Germany.

Muhammad (p.b.u.H) was ordained as a Prophet to the entire mankind and not specifically to  
any single people - the Arabs.

The Old Testament and the New Testament of the Bible now extant have foretold the advent  
of the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.)

Deut: 18: 15 - 18, 33: 2, St. Matthew 13: 31: 21: 34 - 40, St. Marl 12: 1, St. Luke 20: 9, St.  
John 1: 22; 14: 6, 14: 20 and in many other places.

Also see 'Bhavishya Puraanam for prophecies regarding the advent of a Prophet in Arabia.



"In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful."

**'ANF'AL' (SPOILS OF WAR):**

**(165)** It is righteous to fight in defence against aggression and it is best to fight in defence of the faith to protect the life and honour of the weak. To fight those who are arrogant and aggressive and who oppress the weak. This is the teaching of the Holy Qur'an.

**(166) Verse – 17**

**TEXT**

"It is not ye who  
Slew them; it was Allah;  
When thou threwest (a handful  
Of dust) it was not  
Thy act, but Allah's:  
In order that He might  
Test the Believers  
By a gracious trial  
From Himself: for Allah  
Is He who heareth  
And knoweth (all things)"

**COMMENTARY**

**VII - Anf'al : It is permissible to fight in self defence.**

The Believer should not think need not abhorrence for killing the transgressors and oppressors; in fact, it is God who is killing them as a punishment.

**(167) Verse – 29**

**TEXT**

"O ye who believe!  
If ye fear Allah,  
He will grant you a Criterion  
(To judge between right and wrong)  
Remove from you (all) evil  
(That may afflict) you.  
And forgive you;  
For Allah is the Lord  
Of Grace unbounded"

**COMMENTARY**

**VIII - Anf'al: Discretion between right and wrong is inborn.**

Knowledge and discretion between right and wrong is naturally inborn among those who fear God. They are the rightly guided and if they err God will forgive them.

**(168) Verse – 35**

**TEXT**

"Their prayer at the House  
(Of Allah) is nothing but  
Whistling and clapping of hands;  
(Its only answer can be),  
Taste ye the penalty  
Because ye blasphemed"

**COMMENTARY**

**VIII - Anf'al: Jumping and clapping at  
prayers -Wrong.**

The prayer of the pagan Arab idolaters' consisted of whistling clapping of hands and jumping about to the tunes of music. This is also the common sight at the temples. The Holy Qur'an says that prayers should be performed with earnestness and humility in an atmosphere of calm and quiet. Clapping and singing is no prayer.

**(169) /VIII/Verse – 41.**

**TEXT**

"And know that out of  
All the all the booty that ye  
May acquire (in war)  
A fifth share is assigned  
To Allah, - and to the Apostle,  
And to near relatives,  
Orphans, the needy,  
And the way farer, -  
If ye do believe in Allah  
And in the revelation  
We sent down to Our Servant  
On the Day of Testing  
The Day of the meeting  
Of the two forces,  
For Allah hath power  
Over all things"

**COMMENTARY (Spoils of war)**

In bye-gone days the spoils that came into hand from the enemy were given to the commanders and heroes and the lion's share went to the king. The Holy Qur'an has fixed numerous shares; One-fifth to go to Allah and His Apostle to be spent on charities i.e. - among orphans, the deserving poor, ransoming of prisoners of war and way farers and the rest to the warriors participating in the war.

## **CHAPTER - IX**



"In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful."

### **(TAUBA) - REPENTANCE OR (BARAAT) - IMMUNITY:**

This is the only 'SURAH' to which the usual opening formula of 'Bismillah' is not prefixed.

#### **(170) Verse - 25**

##### **TEXT**

"Assuredly Allah did help you  
In many battlefields  
And the day of Hunayn;  
Behold! your great numbers  
Elated you, but they availed  
You naught; the land  
For all that is wide,  
Did constrain you, and ye  
Turned back in retreat"

##### **COMMENTARY**

#### **IX - Tauba: Chastised for being proud - Humility in the hour of victory.**

In the hour of victory one should not be proud. Being proud is contemptible in spite of the righteousness of the cause on the part of the Winning side. Power without humility, riches minus alms and charity and education minus obedience are all a wasted achievements.

It so happened that after the fall of Mecca the Muslims were returning with an army of twelve thousand and on their way back to Madina they were ambushed by an unexpected confederacy of more than four tribes at Hunain. They were about 4000 and they came out with their women to do battle. The Muslim chiefs were proud of their own numbers because at no time before did they have such a large force. The result was frustration after they had won the battle and Defeat was averted only due to the confidence and calm composure of the Prophet who rallied the fleeing victors after a muddle and near rout. The Holy Qur'an is reprimanding the Believers.

#### **(171) IX – TAUBA : Verse - 26**

##### **TEXT**

"But Allah did pour His calm  
On the Messenger and on the Believers  
And sent down forces which ye  
Saw not; He punished  
The Unbelievers; thus doth He  
Reward those without faith.

##### **COMMENTARY**

The Muslims army included 2,000 who had accepted Islam after the fall of Mecca. God reminds the Believers that whatever success they had scored was due to The Muslims army included 2,000 Meccans who had accepted Islam after the Grace of Allah and that he had sent 'invisible force' to bolster them up.

It will be seen from the life of the Prophet that all alone he denounced the worship of idols and asked the pagan Arabs to desist from idolatry. Nobody believed him in the beginning and even his own relatives and dear ones and the entire city of Mecca became his enemies. Yet within twenty years of his Apostolic mission the entire country of Arabia embraced Islam and within the next fifteen years Arabs became a world power and Islam became a world religion and there are thirty crore Muslims, (in 1940). This is the invisible force that has caused the spread of Islam far and wide from its cradle in the Arabian Peninsula.



**(172) Verse – 29**

**TEXT**

"Fight those who believe not  
In Allah nor the last day, Nor  
hold that forbidden  
Which hath been forbidden  
By Allah and His Messenger  
Nor acknowledge the religion  
Of Truth, from among  
The people of the Book,  
Until they pay the Jizyah  
With willing submission  
And feel themselves subdued."

**COMMENTARY**

**IX - TAUBA: 'Jizya' tax levied on the non-Muslim subjects in lieu of military service.**

In this verse the word 'Jizya'h occurs. In Muslim states 'Jizyah' is a tax imposed on the non-Muslim subject in lieu of military service and are exempted from conscription. On the other hand all able bodied Muslims are subjected to compulsory military service. During the Muslim rule some Muslim states - not all - did impose this tax which was disliked as 'discriminatory'. This tax was first imposed by the City State of Madinah in the year 9 A.H.

A Christian delegation from Yeman which waited on the Prophet requested that they may be protected from military aggression by the neighbouring tribes and they would be glad to pay 'Jizyah'.

Misgivings prevailing in India are due to ignorance about the taxation policy of Muslim states. All new taxes are resented and so too, was this tax dubbed as poll tax on non-Muslims and this provoked opposition to Muslim rule.

In all modern states in Europe and America conscription in war time is compulsory and evasion is punished.

**(173) Verse - 30**

**TEXT**

"The Jews call 'Uzair' a son  
Of God and the Christians  
Call Christ the son of God.  
That is a saying from their mouth.  
(In that) They but imitate  
What the unbelievers of old  
Used to say Allah's curse  
Be on them; how they are deluded  
Away from the Truth"

**COMMENTARY**

**IX - TAUBA: 'Ezra' is not the son of god as the Jews believe.**

'Uzair' is named as EZRA in English. He was a great scholar. After the destruction of Jerusalem he recollected many parts of the 'Old Testament' and committed to writing. After serving a sentence of imprisonment in Babylonia, he joined his community. In recognition of his services he was accorded to a status next only to Moses and in course of time was considered as a son of god. However, the Jews have now given up this false belief.

**(174) Verse – 31**

**TEXT**

"They take their priests  
And their anchorites to be  
Their Lords in derogation of Allah,  
And (they take as their Lord).  
Christ, the son of Mary;  
Yet they were commanded  
To worship but One God.  
There is no God but He.  
Praise and Glory to Him  
(Far is He) from having  
The partners they associate  
(With Him)"

**COMMENTARY**

**IX - TAUBA: Practice of treating priests and  
Prophets as sons of god is  
Blasphemous.**

People whose thought trends are accustomed to worshipping the idols numerous gods do not hesitate to deify even great personages amongst them as gods. Religious teachers are treated as gods and even now such great religious teachers as Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Saibaba are treated as gods. And even the educated are worshipping them as gods. If this is not a case of spiritual degradation what else is it? What is even more surprising is that some of them willingly accept being treated and Worshipped as gods and there are some, who were caught as impostors the affairs of the 'OM Mandali' and many other such societies were exposed. May God show them the entire Right path.

**(175) Verse – 34**

**TEXT**

"O ye who believe! There are  
Indeed many among the priests  
And anchorites, who in falsehood  
Devour the substance and men  
And hinder (them) from the Way  
Of Allah. And there are those  
Who bury gold and silver  
And spend it not in the Way  
Of Allah; announce unto them  
A most grievous penalty - ."

**COMMENTARY**

The Holy Qur'an is condemning the indulgence of the priesthood class in falsehood. In our country the high priests and in Europe the churchmen hold immense wealth in cash and immovable properties in cash and endowments to be spent in the way of god but they misuse and live in splendour and this is common knowledge. However, the Government has moved in to control and administer through an Act - The Religious Endowments Act.

**(179) Verse – 40**

**TEXT**

"If ye help not (your leader),  
(It is the matter); for Allah  
Did indeed help him,  
When the unbelievers  
Drove him out; he had  
No more than one companion;  
The two were in the Cave.  
And he said to his companion,  
"Have no fear for Allah  
Is with us" : Then Allah  
Sent down His peace upon him,  
And strengthened him with forces  
Which ye saw not, and humbled  
To the depths the word  
Of the unbelievers  
But the word of Allah  
Is Exalted to the heights;  
For Allah is Exalted in might,  
Wise"

**COMMENTARY**

**IX - TAUBA: Ordeal in the cave on the  
Prophet's flight to Madinah.**

The incident narrated is in the context of the 'flight of the Prophet Muhammad' from Mecca.

The idolaters of Mecca, in their final bid to murder the Prophet, surrounded his house. Forewarned of the conspiracy, the prophet secretly escaped and, along with his companion, Abu Bakr, hid in a cave in a hill 'Jabl e Nur', three miles away from the city. When the conspirators found to their dismay that the Prophet had escaped, they immediately started in pursuit, following the tracks, they did approach the mouth of the cave but they found the mouth of the cave completely covered with a thick web by a spider, and a pigeon's nest with fresh laid eggs and a thickly growing bush covering the mouth. The conspirators thought it impossible for anyone to take refuge in such a cave and turned back. Thus, the Prophet and his companion spent three days in the cave.

When the conspirators had reached the very mouth of the cave Abu Bakr felt disturbed and took fright; the Prophet consoled him, saying: "don't be afraid, we are three - Allah is with us." The conspirators' plans were frustrated thus.

It was the thirteenth year of the Prophet's mission at Mecca. The Prophet and his companion arrived safely in their new city of refuge (Yathrib') - which became, the city of the Prophet - A city state founded by the Prophet and the small republican city was destined to grow and expand into a kingdom with all the Arabs of the Arabian Peninsula embracing Islam.

**(177) Verse – 74**

**TEXT**

"They swear by Allah that said  
Said nothing (evil), but indeed,  
They uttered blasphemy.  
And they did it after accepting  
Islam; and they meditated  
A plot which they were unable  
To carry out; this revenge  
Of theirs was (their) only return  
For the bounty with which  
Allah and His Messenger had enriched  
Them! If they repent,  
It shall be best for them;  
But if they turn back  
(To their evil ways),  
Allah will punish them  
With a grievous penalty  
In this life and in the Hereafter;  
They shall have none on earth  
To protect or help them."

**COMMENTARY**

**IX - TAUBA: Plot to kill the Prophet  
hatched by the Jews.**

Mark! How magnanimous is the teaching of the Holy Qur'an towards the hypocrites, Tiers and the ungrateful ones, who had plotted against the Prophet while he was returning from the battle of Tabuke (after his triumphant entry in Mecca). The Holy Qur'an exhorts them to 'repent' and they will be forgiven. Some of these who uttered blasphemy were the inhabitants of Medina who gained riches and prospered as peace was establishment and trade flourished. The Prophet wished them well in this world and in the Hereafter through spiritual salvation. When questioned about the blasphemies they uttered they denied and swore.

**FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE : LAST SERMON OF THE PROPHET:**

The month of Shawwal passed and in the eleventh month it was proclaimed throughout Madinah that the Prophet would himself lead the Pilgrimage. The month of Dhul Qi'adah was almost at an end, to be followed by Dhu'al Hijjah, the month of pilgrimage. Up until that time, the Prophet had not performed the pilgrimage ritual full but only lesser-pilgrimages on two previous occasions. As soon as the people knew of the Prophet's intention and heard his call to march with him they turned up in thousands - as many as a hundred thousand responded. The Prophet started on journey to Makkah on the 25th of Dhu al Qidah of the year 10 A.H. with 114,000 following him. All his wives, each riding in their own carriage, followed. The faithful were chanting: At your service O God! You have no associates' everyone had put on his pilgrim's garment of two pieces of white linen. The procession reached Makkah on the 4th of Dhu al Hijjah.

The Prophet hastened to the Ka'bah on arrival, went to the black stone and kissed it. Then he circumambulated it seven times, and then he proceeded to the station of Abraham where he performed his prayers. Returning back to the black stone, he kissed it once more and then left the temple area for the Mount of Safa and the Mount of Marwah. He then announced to the pilgrims that whoever did not have an animal to sacrifice should now describe him and bring his pilgrimage ritual to a close. On the eight day he went to Mina and spent the day and night in that locality.

The following day Muhammad (S.A.W.) said his dawn prayers and at sunrise, proceeded to the Mount of Arafat followed by all the pilgrims. As he ascended the mountain, he was surrounded by thousands of his companions reciting the 'talbiyah' and the 'Takbir'. When the sun passed the zenith usve' , his camel was saddled and he rode on it until he reached the valley of 'Uranah'. Bilal (R.A.A.) was holding the nose strap.

**THE LAST SERMON OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (S.A.W.)**

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) delivered his last Sermon in a loud voice to his people. Rabi'ah ibn Umayyah ibn Khalaf repeated the sermon after him, sentence by sentence:-

"ALL PRAISE IS DUE TO ALLAH, so we praise Him, and seek His pardon and we turn to Him, We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of ourselves and from the evil consequences of our deeds. Whom Allah guides aright there is none to lead them astray, and there is none to guide him aright whom Allah leads astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the One, having no partner with Him. His is the Sovereignty and to Him is due all praise. He grants life and causes death and is Powerful over everything.

There is no god but Allah, the One. He fulfilled His Promise and granted victory to His bondsman, and He alone routed the Confederates (of the enemies of Islam).

O people. Listen to my words, for I do not know whether we shall ever meet again and perform Hajj after this year. O ye people, Allah says: "O people, we created you from one male and one female and made you into tribes and nations so as to be known to one another." Verily in the sight of Allah, the most Honoured amongst you is the one who is most God-fearing. There is no Superiority for an Arab over a non-Arab and for a non-Arab over an Arab, or for the White over the Black or the Black over the White except in God-consciousness.

All mankind is the progeny of Adam and Adam was fashioned out of clay. Behold! Every claim of Privilege, whether that of blood or property, is under my heels except that of the custody of the Ka'bah and supply of water to the pilgrims O people of Quraysh, don't appear (on the Day of Judgement) with the burden of this world around your necks, whereas other people may appear (before the Lord) with the rewards of the Hereafter. In that case I shall avail you naught against Allah.

Behold! All practices of the days of ignorance are now under my feet. The 'Blood Revenges' of the days of ignorance are remitted. The first claim on blood I abolish is that of Ibn Rabi'ah b. Harith who was nursed in the tribe of Sa'ad and whom the Hundhayis killed. All 'interest and Usurious dues' accruing from the times of ignorance stand wiped out. And the first amount of interest that I remit is that which Abbas b. Abdul Mattalib had to receive. Verily it is remitted entirely.

O people, verily your blood, your property and your Honour are sacred and inviolable until you appear before your Lord, as the sacred inviolability of this day of yours, this month of yours and this very town (of yours). Verily you will soon meet your Lord and you will be held answerable for your actions.

O people, verily you have got certain Rights over your Women and your Women have certain Rights over you. It is your Right upon them to honour their conjugal rights, and not to commit acts of impropriety, which if they do, you are authorized by Allah to separate them from your beds and chastise them, but not severely, and if they refrain, then clothe and feed them properly.

Behold! It is not permissible for a Woman to give anything from the wealth of her husband to anyone but with his consent.

Treat the Women kindly, since they are your Helpers and not in a position to manage their affairs themselves. Fear Allah concerning Women, for verily you have taken them on the security of Allah and have made their persons lawful unto you by words of Allah.

O people, Allah, the mighty and the Exalted, has ordained to every one his due share (of inheritance) Hence there is no need (of special) testament for a heir, (departing from the rules laid by the Shar'ah).

The child belongs to the marriage-bed and the violator of wedlock shall be stoned. And reckoning of their (deeds), rest with Allah. He who attributes his ancestry to other than his father or claims his client ship to other than his master, the curse of Allah is upon him.

All debts must be repaid, all borrowed property must be returned. Gifts should be reciprocated and a Surety must make good the loss to the assured. Beware; no one committing a Crime is Responsible for it but Himself. Neither the child is responsible for crime of his father, nor is the father responsible for the crime of his child.

Nothing of his Brother is lawful for a Muslim except what he himself gives willingly. So do not wrong yourselves. O people, every Muslim is the brother of other Muslim, and all the Muslims form one Brotherhood. And you're Slaves! See that you feed them with such Food as you eat yourselves, and clothe them with the clothes that you yourselves wear.

Take heed not to go astray after me, and strike one another's' neck. He, who (amongst you) has any trust with him, must return it to its owner.

O people, Listen and obey, though a mangled Abyssinian Slave is appointed your Amir, provided he executes (the ordinance of) the Book of Allah among you.

O people, No Prophet would be raised after me, and No new Ummah (would be formed) after you. Verily I have left amongst you that which will never lead you astray, the Book of Allah, which if you Hold Fast you shall never go Astray.

And Beware of transgressing the Limits set in the manners of Religion, for it is transgression of (the proper bounds of) Religion to (many people) before you.

Verily, Satan is disappointed at not being worshipped in this land of yours, but if obedience in anything (short of worship is expected, that is) he will be pleased in matters you may be disposed to think insignificant; so Beware of him in your matters of Religion.

Behold, Worship your Lord; offer prayers Five times a day; observe Fast in the month of Ramadan; Pay readily the Zakat (dues of poor) on your property; and perform Pilgrimage to the House of Allah and Obey your Rulers and you will be admitted to the Paradise of your Lord.

Let him that is present, Convey it to him, who is absent. For many people to whom the Message is conveyed may be more mindful of it than the audience.

And if you are asked about me, what would you say? They answered: "We bear witness that you have conveyed the trust (of religion) and discharged your ministry of Apostle hood and looked to our welfare.

And if you are asked about me, what would you say? They answered: "We bear witness that you have conveyed the trust (of religion) and discharged your ministry of Apostle hood and looked to our welfare.

Thereupon Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) lifted his fore-finger towards the sky and then pointing towards people said:

O Lord; Bear Thou Witness unto it.

O Lord: Bear Thou Witness unto it.

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The Apostle completed the Hajj and showed men the rites, and taught them what God had prescribed as to their Hajj, the station, the throwing of stones, the circumambulation of the Ka'bah, and what he had permitted and forbidden. It was the pilgrimage of completion and the pilgrimage of 'farewell' because the Apostle did not go on pilgrimage after that.

It was on the occasion of 'Arafa't - Friday, 9th of Dhu'l-Hijjah, afternoon, 10.A.M. that the following verse was Revealed to the Prophet (S.A.W.):

"Today have I perfected your religious law for you and fulfilled My favour unto you, and it has been My good pleasure to choose Islam for you as your Religion."

(V (Al Ma'idah ) / 3)

`Islam is man's self-surrender to God'.

Revelation of the above verse is indeed the crowning glory of the Prophet hood of Muhammad (S.A.W.) announcing Allah's pleasure over the successful accomplishment of his apostolic mission. Commenting on the twenty three years trials and tribulations patiently suffered and overcome by him, Prophet's biographer, Muir, an avowed enemy of Islam, observed "Never since the days when primitive Christianity startled the world from its sleep, and waged a mortal conflict with one atheism, had men seen the like arousing of spiritual life, - the like faith that suffered sacrifices, and took joyfully the spoiling of goods for 'conscience' sake." The mission has been accomplished in his lifetime which has been crystallized in his last sermon delivered from the mount of Arafat.

N.B. With courtesy and acknowledgement: Entire text of the Sermon quoted from: 'Mr. K.A. Majid - Editor and compiler of 'Prayers and Charity'.

### **WHAT IS ISLAM? PROPHET EXPLAINS:**

'Umar' said: "One day, when we were sitting with the Messenger of God' there came unto us a man whose clothes were of exceeding whiteness and whose hair were exceeding blackness, nor were there any signs of travel upon him, although none of us knew him. He sat down, knee unto knee opposite the Prophet, upon whose thighs he placed the palms of his hands, saying: 'O Muhammad, tell me what is the 'surrender' (Islam). The Messenger of God answered him saying: "The surrender is to testify that there is no god but God and that Muhammad is God's Messenger, to perform the prayer, bestow the alms, fast Ramdhan and make, if thou canst, the pilgrimage to the Holy House. "He said: 'Thou hast spoken truly,' and we were amazed that having questioned him he should corroborate him. Then he said: "Tell me what is faith (iman)' He answered: "To believe in God and His Angels and His Books and His Messengers and the Last Day, and to believe "that no good or evil cometh but by His Providence." Thou hast spoken truly, He said; and then 'Tell me what is Excellence (ihsan)' He answered: "To worship God as thou sawest Him, for if thou seest Him not, yet seeth He thee." "Thou hast spoken truly." He said: and then: "Tell me of the Hour". He answered. "The questioned thereof knoweth no better than the Questioner" Then, tell me of the signs "He answered: "that the slave girl shall give birth to her mistress! and that those who were barefoot, naked, needy herdsmen, shall build buildings ever higher and higher. "Then the stranger went away, and I stayed a while after he had gone; and the Prophet said unto me, O Umar, knowest thou the Questioner, who he was? I said, God and His Messenger know best. He said "It was Gabriel. He came unto you to teach you your religion."

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